

goodfood

Middle East

Saucy suppers for two

Barbecued oysters with garlic, paprika & Parmesan butter

DON'T MISS PANCAKE DAY

STACKED HIGH & OOZING WITH CHOCOLATE

EASIEST EVER MIDWEEK MEALS

NEW RECIPES TO LIVEN UP YOUR DAY

WIN!

DINING
VOUCHERS AND
GOURMET
HOTEL STAYS

♥ Treat your Valentine:



Seared sirloin with Japanese dips



Samphire & lemony salmon linguine



Chocolate-filled pancakes with caramelised banana





Monday **TONG**

A night of gastronomic excellence and delectable beverages. A midweek evening brunch of traditional and savoury Thai cuisine set in luxurious surroundings. We have enlisted the musical talents of DJ Safe Smokingroove from 8pm to 12am who will provide a soundtrack of lounge beats and chilled ambience creating a perfect blend.

Every Monday, from AED 295 per person, including house beverages

JW Marriott Marquis Dubai

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Brunch offer is available from 6pm to 11pm. Tong Thai closes at midnight.

Welcome to February!

After what can feel like a never-ending, bleak month of detoxing and regaining normality, we bid farewell to January and welcome February like a breath of fresh air. It's the month everyone finally gives in to eating more than just kale and lettuce leaves, and welcomes the idea of 'all things in moderation'.

And just in time, as there's two scrumptious foodie dates to mark your calendar with this month.

First up, on February 14 we see a global celebration of love. Whether single or in a relationship, Valentine's Day in recent years has become more of a holiday for everyone – as opposed to just the lovers, back in the day. Now, we see friends getting together over dinner, siblings sharing a home cooked meal with parents, and those in love indulging on luxurious ingredients. Contrary to popular belief, it's a holiday for everyone and what better way to celebrate than with food! Inside, you'll find gorgeous dishes like samphire and lemony salmon linguine (*Salmon splendor*, p36), and tender seared sirloin with flavoursome Japanese dips to share (*Raise the steaks*, p26) – all perfect for sharing with those closest to you.

Next, it's Pancake Day on February 28 and to mix things up this year we've gone international with recipes that showcase pancakes in a totally different light – I'm talking Yorkshire pudding meets the pancake, and sweet potato masala dosas (*Planet pancake*, p64). Don't worry, there's traditional too – dripping with maple syrup and filled with chocolate.

As usual, we also have plenty of recipes for everyday use, including midweek meals sure to liven up your day (*Easiest ever midweek meals*, p41).

Whatever you choose to cook this month – do it with love. The best meals are those made with heart and soul.

Have a fabulous February,



Sophie
Editor

WHAT WE'RE LOVING!



"This one-pot pasta makes cooking simple and utterly delicious," says sales executive, Liz.



Sales director, Michael says: "This Thai beef salad is so easy to make and bursting with flavour!"



"For a meal packed with punchy tastes, this spicy jerk potato & pineapple hash is a must try," says graphic designer, Froilan.



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Our recipe descriptions

V Suitable for vegetarians.

❄ You can freeze it.

❄ Not suitable for freezing.

Easy Simple recipes even beginners can make.

A little effort These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry.

More of a challenge Recipes aimed at experienced cooks.

Low fat 12g or less per portion.

Low cal 500 calories or less per main.

Superhealthy Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.

Good for you Low in saturated fat, low in salt.

Heart healthy Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids.

1 of 5-a-day The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving.

Vit C **Iron** **Omega-3** **Calcium** **Folate** **Fibre**

Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients.

GLUTEN FREE Indicates a recipe is free from gluten.

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol.

These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for these symbols:

P Contains pork.

A Contains alcohol.

Your Say

We love hearing from you!



A big thank you for being my rescuer, BBC Good Food ME! My mother-in-law came to visit me on New Year's Eve for along holiday and I up picked your magazine so that I could

impress her with my cooking ability, as she is very fond of home cooked food. The satisfying super speedy soups were super tasty and kept my family busy until my dinner was ready. As my new year resolution is to eat healthy, your January issue is helping me to stick to my diet plan – and for my family, too. The Pro Chef Guide really helped me to understand what it takes to be a cook and I got familiar with few of the renowned chef faces in town. Thank you guys and Happy New Year 2017. Keep growing!

Poonam Gupta



I loved your January 'healthy issue' – I wish more of the issues were like this. I'm trying to adopt a healthier lifestyle this year, so any and all recommendations for where to go and eat healthy food, and health-driven recipes will be most welcome in my household. Cheers BBC Good Food ME!

Sandra Green

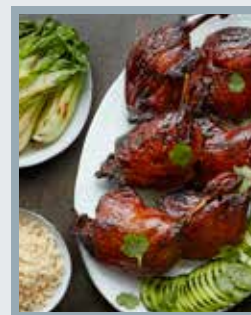


Win!

The Winner of the Star Letter gets a **DHS 1,000 Shopping Voucher from Tavola**, The leading retailer of European products and essential items for kitchens. Tavola is a one-stop shop for bakeware, tableware, high quality cookware and premium brands such as Mauviel, Le Creuset, and Zwilling Kitchen knives. They have stores in the UAE and Qatar, as well as across the GCC.

STAR LETTER





I recently got a new job, after a year of being unemployed. To celebrate I purchased your January issue and prepared the 'twice-cooked sticky duck', results were finger-licking. During unemployment period, it was pretty difficult to pass time, the boredom really got to me. But the amazing thing that changed my free time into something spectacular was the BBC Good Food ME magazines, every page of recipes gave me a reason to look forward to cook differently every day. That's when I realised how good I was at cooking with the magazine's simple and well-explained recipes. BBC Good Food ME played an inspiring role in my 'foody-nerdy' journey. So, keep those recipes coming Good Food, you guys do an awesome job! Can't wait to grab your Valentine's issue. I believe that my love for cooking good food and BBC Good Food ME published with love will continue to walk hand in hand as long as man roams our planet.



Ruth Cardoz

TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com with your thoughts and comments, and send us your photos with your copy of BBC Good Food ME!

You can also connect with us on social media! Find us on:     @bbcgoodfoodme

Or, you could write to us at: The Editor, BBC Good Food Middle East. Grosvenor Business Tower, Barsha Heights, Office 804 PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE.



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Basilico is a unique dining restaurant that satisfies you with genuine service, flavours and aromas of the **Mediterranean** prepared only with the freshest and finest ingredients.

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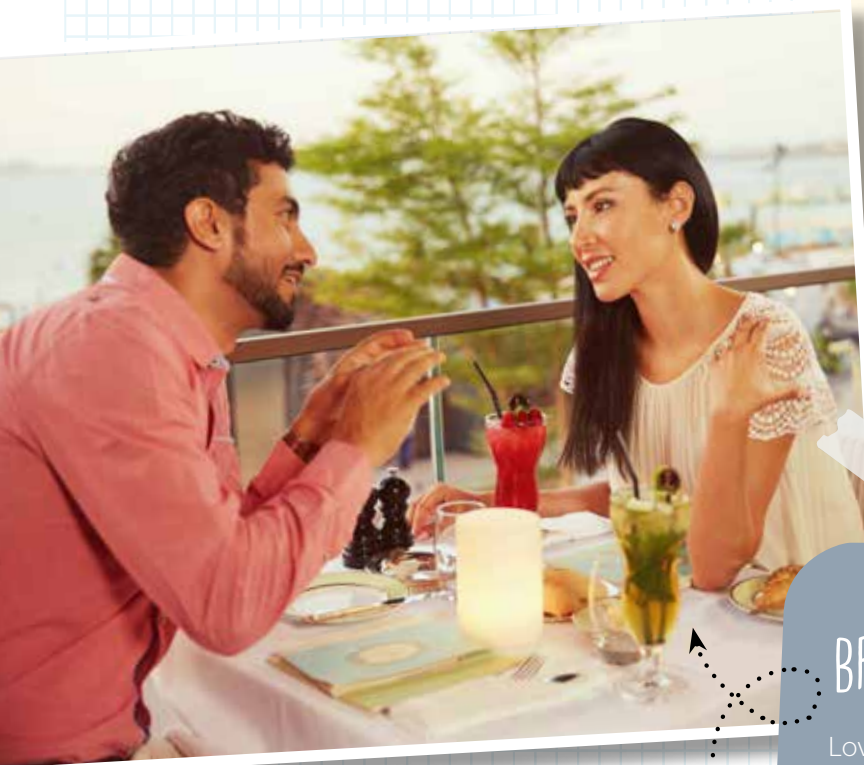
NEWS *nibbles*

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



FOOD TRUCK FEBRUARY

This February, the Truckers DXB food truck movement will bring 40 trucks serving gourmet street food to Dubai and Abu Dhabi with the Food Truck JAM. Now in its second season, you'll find the first food truck stop at Emirates Golf Club on February 11, followed by Abu Dhabi Golf Club on February 17, Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club on February 18, and Emirates Golf Club on February 25. Expect to find food trucks like Calle Tacos, Copperwood, Toasted, The Shebi, Sir Loin & Sons, Yumtingz, and Gobai, among others participating. During the stops, there will also be live performances, house beverages and a Truckers Market featuring 25 local vendors selling quirky handmade crafts and jewellery, plus activities for children. Food Truck JAM is free to attend and opens from 5pm till 11pm. Visit truckers.ae.



BREAKFAST CLUB AT THE BEACH

Love a good brekkie? Well we have good news. The Beach at JBR has launched 'The Breakfast Club', a new programme for you to use when dining at many of the beachfront outlets. Free to subscribe, the loyalty card allows you to avail great discounts at the participating outlets, including the likes of Retro Feasts, Eat Greek, Eggspectation, Leopolds of London, The Counter, La Postreria, Real Madrid Café and more. Offers include 30% off the total bill, buy-one-get-one-free, complimentary hot beverages and more. Get a Breakfast Club card by either emailing thebreakfastclub@thebeach.ae or visiting The Beach's Information Hub, next to The Piazza.

THE BEST BITES

Text SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Health news SARAH LIENARD | Photographs SUPPLIED



CREATIVE CULINARY CONCEPT

Kitchen Nation, a fully equipped culinary incubator has opened its doors in the UAE, encouraging foodie entrepreneurs and innovators to bring their unique concepts to the F&B market. As an aid to those creative chefs lacking resources, Kitchen Nation aims to provide a platform to nurture their talent through joined services and a support system. Located in Jumeirah Lake Towers, Kitchen Nation is committed to bringing bootstrap entrepreneurs together under the same roof and giving them a helping hand to take the first courageous step. "This kitchen is not a charity, but an empowering community transformation," said Rami Salous, Founder and CEO of Kitchen Nation. **Visit kitchennation.ae.**

A FESTIVAL FOR FOODIES



Dubai Food Festival (DFF), Dubai's annual citywide culinary celebration, will return from February 23 to March 11, offering a 17-day programme of events, activities, promotions and appearances by a host of celebrity chefs. Don't miss the Etisalat Beach Canteen at Sunset Beach – it's free to attend and will bring a fiesta of food, entertainment, sport, fitness and family fun throughout the festival. From February 23 to March 4, the Miele Dubai Restaurant Week will see 15 of Dubai's high-end restaurants offers a limited edition three-course set menu for Dhs199 – booking now available through RoundMenu. Restaurants participating include Bread Street Kitchen at Atlantis, The Palm, Pierchic, Scape Restaurant & Bar at the Burj Al Arab, Marina Social, Social by Heinz Beck, Rhodes W1 and more. **Visit roundmenu.com/dubai/restaurant-week.**

MENU DECODER

LAO CUISINE

Lao cuisine is the cuisine of Laos, which is distinct from other Southeast Asian cuisines. Saiphin Moore, who owns Lao Café in London, explains all you need to know about the ever-popular cuisine. Expect zingy salads, curries, sticky rice, grilled meat and lots of herbs.



Bamboo shoot salad (Soup-nor-mai)

Made from grilled young bamboo shoots, which are shredded, mixed with chilli flakes, lime juice and fermented fish sauce, and garnished with toasted rice, spring onions and coriander.

Banana flower/Blossom (Hua-plee)

Used in many curries and soups. It is best picked before the tree produces any fruits, so that the flower meat is more flavoursome.

Banana leaf (Bai-tong)

Used when steaming in dishes, from sticky rice to 'mok' (steamed curry paste).

Dill (Pak-chi-Lao)

This was introduced during the French occupation and has become a key ingredient.

Fermented fish sauce (Pla-raa)

Usually made from anchovies, and used in salads and curries as a base, adding an umami flavour.

Grilled sticky rice (Khao-jee)

Although steamed sticky rice accompanies most meals, grilled sticky rice is a special treat. It is shaped onto a skewer, dipped in egg yolk, then grilled over charcoal.

Mixed mushroom curry (Gang-hed)

A hot, spicy curry made with foraged mushrooms, the juice from yanang leaves, lemongrass, galangal, chillies and dill.

Pickled crab (Phoo-na)

Field crabs, found in rice fields, are salted and pickled, and mostly used in papaya salad.



Eat the world DXB

Eat the World DXB comes to town from February 23-25, bringing with it top food traders from America, Singapore and the UK. With a celebrity chef theatre, an artisanal food market plus outdoor cinema featuring a specially curated programme of food-themed films, there's something to satisfy every palette. Cookery demonstrations, a tea and cake feature, children's activities and entertainment zone, an extended programme of live music and a traditional Bedouin tent with falconry and fresh Arabic coffee will add to the experience. For more information and tickets for Eat the World DXB 2017, visit eattheworld.ae.

CLEAN EATS

With ample variety of healthy restaurants around town, Eat Clean ME is set to launch in Dubai soon as the region's first online ordering platform for healthy meals only. The website will facilitate those looking to attain their ideal meal according to health conscious dietary needs in the comfort of your own home or workplace. See Eat Clean ME on Facebook and Instagram.



Top product picks



On a health kick? this Hurom Slow Juicer is an easy way to immediately boost your diet. This juicer preserves the natural taste and nutrition of fruits and vegetables by gently squeezing and pressing ingredients to minimize frictional heat. Dhs1,800 from citrusstv.com.

Electrolux is bringing professional techniques to the heart of the home – enabling amateur chefs to create remarkable meals and dishes every day of the week. This Stand Mixer is just one of the latest items on offer. Dhs8,900 from grandcuisine.com.



Love pineapple, but hate cutting it up? This Pineapple Slicer & Wedger peels, cores and slices fresh pineapple with the turn of a handle! Dhs70 from Lakeland stores.



GET INSPIRALIZED

Turn simple vegetables into healthy exciting meals

We've all embraced spiralizing as a simple and healthy way to transform raw veg into spaghetti spirals and make food prep fun. But there's so much more to it than just slinky salads and lower-carb spaghetti – think delicious desserts, tasty twisty treats and even comforting casseroles. In fact spiralizing lets us make super-healthy versions of lots of our favourite feasts, all lower in carbs but packed full of fresh fruit and veg flavours, and we've got lots of ideas to help you get inspiralized.



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Flavours of the *month*

Here is what's hot and happening around town this month.

New on the block

↘ **Matto, The Oberoi Dubai**

From the creators of Iris and Indie DIFC, comes the unconventional Italian restaurant, Matto. Open since January 23, the homegrown restaurant focuses on classic Italian food with a side of mischief. The industrial décor creates a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere, while an open kitchen creates a live culinary experience. Menu highlights include signature recipes like Stinco Di Agnello, Astice e Ceci, plus Stracciatella and Tartufo. Call 04-4441335.

↘ **Il Borro Tuscan Bistro Dubai, Jumeirah Al Naseem**

Representing 1,000 years of history, the authentic new restaurant and bar fuses innate Italian hospitality in a biodynamic approach. Now open in its first venture outside of Italy, the waterfront venue fuses a vibrant restaurant and bar area, and offers a culinary experience where innovation meets tradition. Inside you'll find an array of fresh fish, aged meat and a selection of fine cheeses – expect Burrata galore and signature tartares. Call 04-2752555.

↘ **Nezesaussi Grill, The Address Dubai Marina**

Short for New Zealand, South Africa and Australia, 'Nezesaussi' Grill has launched its second venue at The Address Dubai Marina, following the success of its first outlet at Manzil Downtown Dubai. Defined by its sports paraphernalia and warm interior design, the sports bar is a place for gathering with friends to tuck into a hearty meal while watching the latest game on one of the 20 television screens or mega screens. Call 04-4367777.

↘ **Bareburger, City Walk**

Dubai's latest import from New York City, has opened doors at City Walk. With a health conscious menu, Bareburger is dedicated to organic, non-GMO, all natural ingredients. So, if you're in the mood for a brilliant burger, sans bad ingredients, head to Bareburger. Call 04-3387110.

Matto, The Oberoi Dubai

Text by SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs SUPPLIED

Benihana, Amwaj Rotana

From February 1 – 28, experience a taste of the revered Oyster Festival celebrated in Matsushima, a scenic town in the northern region of Japan, at Amwaj Rotana. Known to the Japanese as 'kaki matsuri', the festival has taken place annually for the past 36 years. Held in the peak of the oyster season when oysters are at their best in Matsushima, Benihana has introduced an a la carte menu of oyster creations served with Kakinabe (traditional Japanese oyster soup) – available this month only, and perfect for Valentine's. Indulge in oyster tempura made with shallots and gari shoyu, oyster ponzu served with cucumber, shiso and ponzu and oyster yuzu served with green apple and yuzu-soya. Call 04-4282000 or 04-4283089.



Il Capo, The Westin Dubai, Al Habtoor City

This Valentine's Day enjoy a special four-course set menu with a glass of sparkling grape upon arrival with your loved one. Find Il Capo transformed with a San Valentino theme and guests wearing red will be entered into a competition to win an overnight weekend stay at The Westin Dubai, Al Habtoor City, with a couple's massage at the Heavenly Spa by Westin. Priced at Dhs595 per couple from 7-11pm on February 14. Call 04-4355577.



Valentine's Day
is on
February 14



Choix Patisserie par Pierre Gagnaire, InterContinental Dubai Festival City

Sweeten your Valentine with an authentic Parisian culinary experience at Choix Patisserie and Restaurant par Pierre Gagnaire with a special three-tier afternoon tea. As you sip your tea, enjoy a selection of finger sandwiches, scones and pastries within an opulent setting with live pianist in the lobby from 4.30 to 7.30pm and transform your afternoon into a memorable and indulgent treat. Priced at Dhs275 per couple with soft beverages. Call 04-7011127/28.



Weslodge, JW Marriott Marquis Dubai

Enjoy Valentine's Day from the 68th floor, where you and your loved one can indulge in a delicious four-course dinner and savour stunning panoramic views of the city, along with the usual Weslodge feel good vibes. Priced at Dhs500 per couple, for food and a bottle of grape. Call 04-5601700.

Vanitas, Palazzo Versace Dubai

Set overlooking the waters of the Dubai Creek, Vanitas sets the scene for an intimate and romantic dinner this Valentine's Day. Savour Italian flavours from His & Hers menus, including highlights like authentic, homemade black truffle tortello, and grilled tooth fish and caramel bavaroise. After dinner, you'll receive a rose and a beautifully designed Versace box of chocolates. From 7-11pm on February 14, priced at Dhs350 per person for a four-course menu. Call 04-5568820.

Private dining, The Westin Mina Seyahi



Priced from Dhs1,000 per person, enjoy a menu compiled by a team of chefs from outlets including Bussola, Hunters, China Grill, Spice Emporium and Blue Orange, each featuring a selection of signature dishes. Call 04-5117139.

This Valentine's Day, spoil your loved one with an exclusive private dinner for two. With your choice of several intimate settings across the Mina Seyahi complex, from beachfront to terrace, and a selection of specially designed menu options from the hotel's restaurants, you're free to create the perfect dining experience for you and that special someone.



👉 **folly by Nick & Scott, Madinat Jumeirah**

Boasting views of the Madinat's idyllic waterways, Burj Al Arab and beyond, folly by Nick & Scott opens its doors this month. Comprised of an indoor dining area and open, interactive kitchen, as well as outdoor bars and terraces, folly offers an informal take on modern fine dining, in a relaxed yet sophisticated atmosphere. Dishes like smoked paprika monkfish cheeks and Omani shrimp, marjoram and lime gremolata sit alongside lamb saddle, whipped pine nuts and salsa (pictured). folly's inventive cocktail menu is inspired by natural elements – agave, juniper, grain and malt – and retro-style punch bowls served in sharing barrels make the venue ideal for social drinking, as well as dinner. *Call 050-5534168.*

👉 **Shaka King by Tom & Serg, Al Quoz**



Serving up healthy eats and treats from the Tom & Serg kitchen, seven days a week from 6pm-late, Shaka King has arrived from Hawaii to launch the restaurant's latest pop-up. You can sit in, take away or have his fresh flavours delivered. The

menu is made up of Shaka King's home town island pokés (a traditional fresh fish salad from Hawaii) and designer burgers, which are all guilt-free yet indulgent. *Call 056-474 6812.*

👉 **Laluz, DIFC**



Every day from 5-8pm, 'LaLuz Social' invites you to enjoy light bites and traditional 'Pinchos' sharing dishes paired with with two bottles of Estrella Damm or two glasses of Cava, for Dhs105 per person. Enjoy the sensation of the spherical olives, bursting in the mouth to reveal an olive reduction,

followed with a shot of punchy gazpacho before grazing on plump and crunchy chicken croquettes and seasoned aubergine with black olive miso. expertly balances the roasted flavours of the vegetable with a delicate dash of the East. After-work bites made easy! *Call 04-3597777.*

👉 **The St. Regis Dubai**

Grape lovers, this one is for you! A special new evening has launched at The St. Regis Dubai, which sees the first Tuesday of each month this year host a 'Wine Journey' dinner at one of its restaurants. Each month showcases grape from a different country – carefully paired with a three-course set menu. This month, Brasserie Quartier will host an Italian journey, whereas next month an Australian affair will be held at J&G Steakhouse (pictured), Burgundy at Brasserie Quartier will follow in April, the 'Best Of The West' in May, New Zealand in July, Spain in August, USA in September, Chile in October, South Africa in November, and then finally Bordeaux in December. The three-course pairing menu is priced at Dhs440 per person. *Call 04-4355555.*



Love cheese?

Nosh, Mövenpick Hotel Jumeirah Lakes Towers



Cheese fondue nights are back at Nosh, where you can dip, swirl or twirl till your heart's content. Experience the traditional taste of Switzerland, with a bubbling pot of hot melted cheese deliciousness and a warm vibe from Saturday to Wednesday. Designed to be shared among friends,

families or couples, the Alpine dish is served with generous baskets of crusty bread, vegetables, pickled cornichons, potatoes and green salad. Priced at Dhs75 per person (minimum two people per reservation) from 6.30 – 10.30 pm. To enhance, add a bottle of grape for Dhs120. *Call 04-4380000.*

👉 **caféM, Media One Hotel**

Love cheese and grape? The recently refurbished caféM is where to head on a Wednesday or Thursday, where you can appreciate an excellent selection of fine cheeses with quality whites and reds, plus extra touches from the kitchen like cheese fondue, hot fried cheese and individual creamy cheese dessert. Priced at Dhs175 for unlimited F&B from 7-10pm, or Dhs199 with bubbly. *Call 04-4271000.*

One

Night To Celebrate
Everlasting

Love



ONE DESTINATION TO SET THE SCENE FOR ROMANCE.

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Tried & tasted

Each month, we review three of the city's top tables.



At.mosphere Restaurant, Burj Khalifa



Reviewed by Sophie McCarrick
Editor of BBC Good Food Middle East, lover of all things food and a keen seeker of new dining experiences.

Where:

COYA, FOUR SEASONS RESORT DUBAI

Dining experience: Brunch – every Friday from 12.30pm to 4pm.

What's it like? From the moment you step through Coya's doors, expect to be hit with a wave of tasteful fun. Alive with Peruvian vibrance, the atmosphere is inviting and a warm welcome ensures you're in for a good time. Your brunch journey begins at the Pisco Lounge, where expert bartenders are on hand to whip up perfected pisco sours – or learn to make one yourself at the interactive DIY pisco

bar. The décor is busy (in a good way) and abundant with rich colours – I find my eyes continuously wandering the walls in awe of detail to Coya's South American roots, particularly to the endless jars of pisco that sit infusing with varied ingredients – and not forgetting the gorgeous city skyline views.

What are the food highlights?

Combining all three concepts you usually find individually at other brunches, Coya's restaurant has a small, but plentiful buffet laid across the ceviche counter, it offers main dishes brought to your table from an à la carte menu, and it goes to sharing-style for dessert. The food is stunning, and at times surprising with explosions of unexpected flavour – although we'd not expect any less with the kitchen headed up by chef Benjamin Wan, who won 'Chef of the Year' at the *BBC Good Food Middle*

East Awards 2016. Overall, food highlights include the red snapper ceviche with truffle and ponzu, and mains of spiced beef fillet and Chilean sea bass cazuela with Nikkei rice.

How was the service? Coya's team were attentive – without being intrusive. With many originating from Latin American roots, it gave the restaurant real authenticity and service staff could explain dishes with confidence and



fascinating traditional stories. Moving to the lounge, Coya's barmen practice world-class showmanship – they know their stuff, and it's a pleasure to watch.

The bottom line: A vibrant brunch with high-quality F&B to enjoy with friends or your other half. Lively brunches in Dubai sometimes verge on boisterous, tacky territory, however, Coya successfully maintains a classy, yet vibrant and entertaining atmosphere – thumbs up all around! It's a sell-out most weeks, so make sure you book in advance.

Want to go? Priced at Dh\$328 with soft drinks, Dh\$498 with house beverages, and Dh\$598 with champagne. This Valentine's there's also a special menu on February 14 priced at Dh\$620 per person. Call 04-3169600 or e-mail reservations@coyarestaurant.ae.



Photographs SUPPLIED



Where:
AT.MOSPHERE
RESTAURANT,
BURJ KHALIFA

Dining experience: Dinner

What's it like? This is a place to go when you're looking for a dining experience to remember. Perched beautifully on the 122 floor of the world's tallest building, At.mosphere offers incomparable, breathtaking views through floor-to-ceiling windows. You can get dressed up to come here and not feel out of place in



dazzling surroundings – it's definitely a spot to celebrate, treat your loved one, or impress guests. Expect pristine white table cloths and simplistic, chic décor. The dimly lit restaurant makes for an intimate, romantic experience – and allows the city's lights below to sparkle and shine even more.

What are the food highlights?

Firstly, I must admit that I was apprehensive before arriving. I feared the food may take backseat – with all emphasis spent on location and the destination's iconic nature. But wow, I needn't have been. With new executive chef Christopher Graham at the helm, food here takes center stage and doesn't disappoint. There are various tasting menus available, ranging from eight-course to three-course, with and without pairing. And, although each course delivered was perfectly executed in terms of exquisite presentation and

unique flavour combinations, favourites include a stunning pearl barley risotto with chestnut and Alba truffle (I love pearl barley and find it so under-used in Dubai, so this dish was a lovely surprise), a 36-hour dry aged tenderloin cheek served with smoked polenta, carrot and leek ash, and the succulent John dory dish, which came with crayfish, corn and a chicken wing terrine-like accompaniment. Not forgetting the showstopping desserts. For refreshing flavours, the mandarin espuma-filled sphere is a work of art and tastes phenomenal, or for a more comforting ending, the chocolate moelleux with parsnip ice-cream is incredibly moreish.

How was the service? Second to none, the service team were excellent. Well versed on the offering and always on hand if needed.

The bottom line: An infallible dining experience in the sky to share with those closest to you. Go hungry, as portion sizes are very generous (as course seven arrives you'll wish you'd skipped lunch beforehand). With Valentine's this month, book a table on February 14 for Dhs750 per person for a five-course menu.

Want to go? Prices start at Dhs680 per person for six courses. Call 04-8883828 or e-mail atmosphere@atmosphereburjkhalifa.com.



Where:
MORAH, JW MARRIOTT
MARQUIS DUBAI

Dining experience: Dinner

What's it like? A stunning two-story, 360° restaurant and bar set atop the world's tallest hotel, Morah – from the guys who brought Weslodge to Dubai (just a few floors below) – opened doors last month. Located on levels 71 and 72, the venue is beautifully feminine, decorated with soft coral and blue

pastels. Offering panoramic views over Dubai, a whitewashed bar with subtle brass detailing welcomes you before heading down a glamorous spiral – Great Gatsby-esk – staircase. The vibe is relaxed and chic to begin, however, expect the music and crowd to pick up as the night moves on, making it a one-stop shop for an evening out.

What are the food highlights?

Morah's menu, created by executive chef Stuart Cameron, presents a colourful selection of vibrant Mediterranean flavours infused with Eastern influence.

It showcases regional spices and carefully marries them with coastal favourites using classic cooking techniques and modern methods to give a contemporary feel. An extensive list of meze will kick things off, with larger, sharing style dishes to follow – expect things like lamb, duck, octopus, a daily selection of fresh fish, as well many vegetarian options. Must try dishes include the tuna tartar with jalapeno dressing, lamb ribs with dukkah, the truffle pide, and for dessert a strawberry cheesecake qatayef.

How was the service? The team at Morah are young and enthusiastic – giving the venue energy and a sense of youthfulness. We experienced a couple of service hiccups (I suspect minor teething issues with it being a new opening), however, they were quickly and professionally rectified.

The bottom line: A gorgeous spot to head with your girlfriends for dinner (or Friday brunch) and a few cocktails.

Want to go? Around Dhs300 for a three-course meal. Call 04-5601799 or e-mail reservations@morahdubai.com.



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MADE WITH REAL PASSION
AND REAL CREAM”

Ludovic Audaux

Chef Pâtissier, Hôtel St Regis, Dubai



Saint-Honoré

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It has unique whipping and holding qualities needed to create perfect pastries, as well as that unmistakable, natural creamy taste.

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Go guilt-free with these lemon hearts that are just 35 calories a piece – made with all-natural ingredients. **DHS45 FOR PACK OF 12, RIGHT BITE.**



This treat-filled, pure bliss basket is sure to keep any chocolate loving person happy for many weeks to come. **DHS714, GODIVA.**



From pink tea, to passion fruit and raspberry preserve, pick up a bespoke hamper full of edible surprises. **FROM DHS300 TO DHS1,500, FORTNUM & MASON.**



Store anything from spices to snacks in this heart keepsake drawer set. **DHS270, LAKELAND.**

This gorgeous Valentine's Heart Sweet Box comes free (yes, FREE!), when you buy any three Valentine's good gifts from Marks & Spencer.



Surprise your family and friends (or a secret Valentine) with a chocolate love letter lolly. **DHS15, MARKS & SPENCER.**



GOURMET GIFTS

Romantic goodies to treat your loved one with this Valentine's Day (or any day!).



Does your Valentine love to bake? This pretty in pink mixer makes for a perfect gift. **DHS610, LAKELAND.**



How adorable is this bespoke Valentine's Hamper? Complete with chocolate treats and teddy cuddles. **DHS950, BOUTIQUE LE CHOCOLAT.**



These trendy, chemical-free flasks by Fressko are the must have for hot and cold drinks. **DHS179, VIRGIN MEGASTORES.**

ASK THE EXPERTS

For those starting 2017 with the goal to learn more about food photography and how to do it, which courses would you recommend taking?



Sally Prosser

Author of award-winning food and travel blog www.mycustardpie.com and keen eater. Champion of sourcing local, ethical, seasonal ingredients, knowing where your food comes from and the impact it has on your health and the planet. Loves custard.



Food can be one of the most difficult subjects to capture and the line between appetising and revolting is a fine one. Over the years I've taken a whole range of courses, here are a few I'd recommend:

GPP Photo week is 10-17 February and I've signed up for a workshop with famous food photographer Matt Armendariz. I attended a short seminar with Matt before at GPP and I know he's an excellent communicator as well as superbly creative. Vibrant and engaging food stylist Fiona Archibold is also conducting some sessions. See: gulfphotoplus.com/gpp/2017.

Mita K Wolff runs annual food photography and styling workshops here in Dubai which are as fun and

delicious as they are instructive. Check the 'workshops' page on whatsforlunchhoney.net to see when the 2017 dates are released (they sell out quickly). Good for all levels of skill.

Last year I spent a weekend of intensive learning with professional food photographer Iain Bagwell and food stylist Erin Merhar who came over from the US to teach. It was mind-blowing a huge step forward with my own photography. See: foodframe.net for details – not a course for beginners.

A great resource to get started and really improve your images is an e-book by Lindsay Olson of Pinch of Yum blog. It costs 29 USD and is an excellent step by step practical guide (with a 30 day money back guarantee). See: pinchofyum.com/tasty-food-photography.

On my wishlist is a workshop with the First We Eat duo, Eva Kosmas Flores and Carey Nershi. They choose beautiful locations around the world to share their professional knowledge in-depth. Right now just one session is not fully booked in 2017, a testament to their popularity. See: firstweeat.co/workshops/#eat-learn-repeat.

Finally, there's a page on my blog dedicated to food photography and styling advice and resources, see at mycustardpie.com/food-photography-styling-workshop-dubai/.

Happy food shooting!



Well done on deciding to treat your loved one to a home cooked meal – this is already special! To make sure your evening goes well, treat it as professional chefs would do, by having a plan.

A special dinner does not have to be complicated. Choose a menu, that you feel comfortable with. Valentine's night is not the time to try to make a perfect soufflé for the first time. But it is the day to splurge. Likely, you are cooking only for two, so you can indulge on the ingredients, that you both deem special – oysters, caviar, berries, quality chocolate and cheese – whatever you fancy. I'd just like to point out that none of these items need cooking!

Opt for a cold starter – ceviche is ideal and will look really pretty on the plate. You can also buy good quality liver pâté and serve it with toasted brioche or bread.

Slow cook your main. A pot like Le Creuset will transform even a complete beginner into a master chef (or close enough). Get a shoulder of lamb or beef roast, season it. Brown the meat all over in the pot, add garlic, shallots herbs and a cup of water. Let it roast in an oven on 100C all day (while you are at work or on 140C for 4 hours – checking on the liquid occasionally) – 30 minutes before serving, add potatoes, carrots or other veg. Add water or stock and turn the temperature to 170C. Serve once the vegetables are cooked.

And dessert? Panna cotta is easy to make and will look amazing garnished with berries. Or, chocolate truffles and a cheese board – delicious and light enough to keep you going the whole night, remembering how you first met.

Happy Valentine's!

To make a romantic Valentine's meal without needing to be in the kitchen all night, what three-course menu would you recommend?



Tomas Reger

Award-winning freelance chef and food consultant behind successful projects such as Intersect by Lexus Dubai, Le Sushi Bar Beirut, Junkyard Beirut and the Bloomie's Kitchen Cooking Demo Series.

ASK THE EXPERTS

It's Pancake Day this month. What's the trick to making the perfect pancake, and what toppings would you recommend that aren't packed with sugar and calories?



Darren Velvick

Head chef at The Croft, Dubai Marriott Harbour Hotel & Suites, the former patron chef of Table9 has also been head chef at two Michelin-starred restaurant, Marcus Wareing at The Berkeley, and worked alongside Gordon Ramsay at Pétrus.



As a family we make pancakes a few times a week. I make gluten-free pancakes and we prefer the Scotch style pancakes that are thicker rather than the thin French style crepe.

To make the thicker ones nice and light, I do something that isn't in the usual recipe method. I separate the egg whites and yolks, whisk the yolks with the flour and add the milk (I use almond milk or coconut milk), whisk the whites with a little sugar or honey to make a light meringue (the sugar is needed to colour the pancakes whilst cooking), and then fold the yolk mix and meringue

together to make a really light batter. Pan fry in coconut oil straight away as the mix will drop within an hour.

For topping, I'd recommend what I use with my family: banana, dates, maple syrup, and chopped nuts. I also make a bitter chocolate spread, which is nice on top too. Berries are great as well, sprinkled on top or added to the batter. Add some cinnamon to the batter too, which gives the nice taste to the pancakes. I normally stay away from sugar and prefer to use natural sugars instead, like maple syrup and honey.

You can also make savoury ones, using the same batter as I mentioned above, but with carrot and chickpea. One of our favourite combinations is sweetcorn and kale, or with sweet potato.

Happy Pancake Day!



I always recommend to my clients the first step is to get your vitamins from the food that you eat, through a well-planned diet this is possible. Only after you have attempted this you can then consider supplementing your diet with extra vitamins if needed. For example, if you are consuming 4 + servings of vegetables and 2 + fruit then that will take care of vitamin A, C, K, E and most of the B-group. Team this with healthy fat sources such as oily fish, walnuts and flaxseed to boost your omega-3.

The only accurate way to know exactly what vitamins you are lacking is by having tests done with your doctor. Every individual is different depending on various factors such as diet and

geographic location. For example, because of the climate in Dubai and cultural dress many people are deficient in vitamin D (from the sun). Or if you don't eat fish or any seafood then an omega-3 supplement may benefit you.

Most store-bought multivitamins are filled with water soluble vitamins. Water soluble vitamins mean your body doesn't store them, you will absorb what is needed and then excrete the rest in the urine. In fact, you may even notice after taking a multivitamin your urine is often bright yellow. While multivitamins are not bad for you, quite often your body won't absorb it all and it just ends up as expensive urine!

One thing I take every day and recommend it to my clients is a good quality greens powder. It is a powdered form of fruits, vegetables and herbs. Because they are real-food based as opposed to synthetic vitamins they are easier for the body to recognise and absorb.

On a day-to-day basis, what essential vitamins should we be consuming? There's talk of multivitamins being bad for you – is this true?

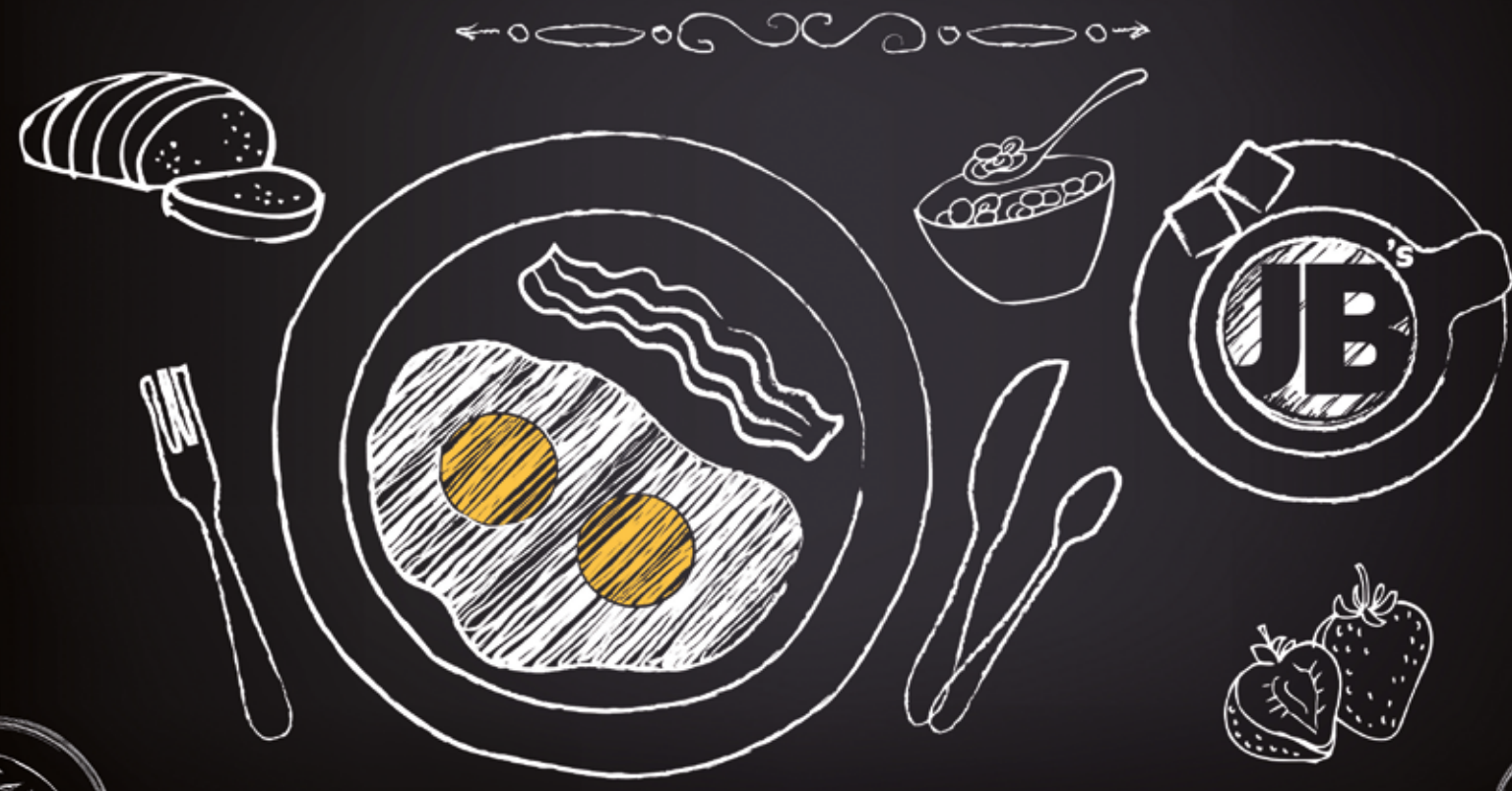


Chloe Moir

A nutritionist with over 4 years' experience, Chloe teaches clients to make healthy choices and small lifestyle changes that help to achieve personal goals. Her food and nutrition blog offers nutrition tips and nutritious recipes: www.chloemoirnutrition.com.



BREAKFAST



Amwaj
Rotana

Jumeirah Beach – Dubai

Sunny Side... Down at JB's


Fridays & Saturdays from 9 am to 12 noon

Whether you've got the appetite for a 'Big Brekkie' or a 'Breakfast of Champions', JB's will make sure your weekend starts sunny side up.

JB's only gastropub now offers a breakfast menu that's great for a traditional English breakfast or for those seeking something healthy. Running from 9 am to 12 noon, you can sleep in and join us for a late breakfast. There's 'Breakfast for the Tots' too.

Visit rotanatimes.com/amwajrotana for more information. For reservations, please call +971 (0)4 428 2000 or email: dining.amwaj@rotana.com.



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rotana.com

Use your spiralizer!

New ways to transform your vegetables
into satisfying and nutritious meals

recipes SOPHIE GODWIN *photographs* MIKE ENGLISH



Sweet potato hash, eggs & smashed avo

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 20 mins **EASY** **V**

1 large ripe avocado
1 lime, juiced
1 tbsp olive oil
1 red onion, ends trimmed and spiralized on a flat blade
2 medium sweet potatoes, ends trimmed and spiralized into thin noodles
2 large eggs
sriracha, for drizzling

1 Smash up the avocado with a fork, leaving some pieces chunky, then add the lime juice and season to taste.

2 Heat the oil in a large, non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 2 mins, then stir in the sweet potato. Season and press the potato into the pan with the back of a wooden spoon. Cook for 10-15 mins,



stirring occasionally, until the potato is softened and crisping at the edges.

3 Make two spaces in the pan, crack in the eggs and cook for 2-3 mins until the whites are just set and the yolks runny. Dollop on the avocado and drizzle with sriracha to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • fibre • vit c •
3 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING 558 kcs • fat 32g • saturates 7g
• carbs 47g • sugars 21g • fibre 12g • protein 14g
• salt 0.6g

Black bean potato nachos

SERVES 3-4 **PREP** 15 mins
COOK 30 mins **EASY** **V**

700g Maris Piper or King Edward potatoes, scrubbed, spiralized into flat ribbons, then cut into round slices
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp smoked paprika
100g extra mature cheddar, grated
400g can black beans, drained and rinsed
½ small pack coriander, roughly chopped

For the red pepper salsa
20g pickled jalapeños, chopped
100g roasted red peppers, chopped
1 small red onion, finely chopped
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 8. Line two large baking sheets with baking parchment. Brush the potato slices with oil, season and sprinkle over the



paprika. Bake for 10-15 mins until completely crisp.

2 Reduce oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Transfer half the crisps to an ovenproof dish, layer with half the beans and cheese, then repeat. Return to the oven for 10 mins until the cheese melts.

3 Meanwhile, mix all the salsa ingredients and season. Top the nachos with salsa and coriander.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • folate • fibre •
1 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING (4) 384 kcs • fat 17g •
saturates 7g • carbs 38g • sugars 2g •
fibre 8g • protein 14g • salt 1.2g

Thai beef salad

SERVES 2 **PREP** 30 mins
COOK 5 mins **EASY**

1 cucumber and 1 mooli, ends trimmed, halved widthways and spiralized into thin noodles, then patted dry and any long strands cut in half
1 rump steak (200-250g)
2 tsp groundnut or sunflower oil
100g beansprouts
small pack coriander, leaves picked

For the dressing

1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tbsp fish sauce
1 tbsp soft brown sugar
½ lime, zested and juiced
1 red chilli, finely chopped (deseeded if you like)

1 Mix all the dressing ingredients, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. In a large bowl, toss the cucumber and mooli with half the dressing.



2 Rub the steak with the oil and season on both sides. Heat a frying pan until it is searing hot. Fry the steak for 2-3 mins each side for medium rare. Transfer to a plate to rest.
3 To assemble the salad, pile the vegetables onto plates and mix with the beansprouts and coriander. Top with the steak and remaining dressing.

GOOD TO KNOW low cal • folate • vit c • iron •
3 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING 351 kcs • fat 16g • saturates 5g
• carbs 18g • sugars 16g • fibre 3g • protein 32g
• salt 1.8g

Prawn, avocado & cucumber salad

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins plus marinating **COOK** 2 mins **EASY**

300g cooked, peeled king prawns, patted dry
120g baby spinach, washed and patted dry
2 avocados, sliced
1 large cucumber, ends trimmed, halved widthways and spiralized into thick ribbons, then patted dry, any very long strands cut in half
50g cashew nuts, toasted and roughly chopped

For the dressing

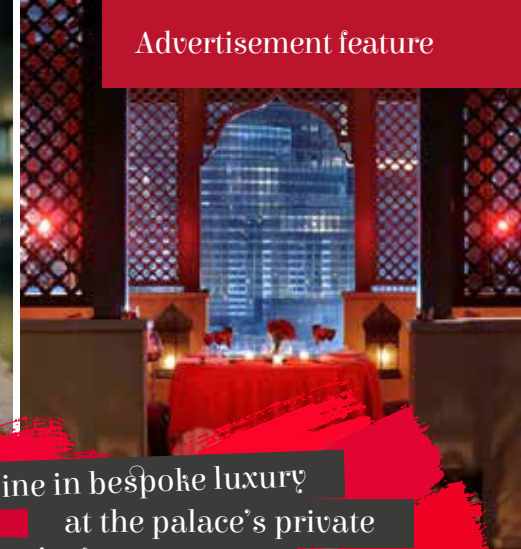
1 red chilli, finely chopped (deseeded if you like)
1 lime, zested and juiced
1½ tbsp each sesame oil and soy sauce

1 Mix all the dressing ingredients together in a large bowl with some black pepper. Tip in the prawns and leave to marinate for 10 mins.



2 Lift the prawns out of the bowl and transfer to a plate, then toss the spinach in the remaining dressing. Add in the avocado and cucumber, and carefully toss to combine.
3 Divide the salad between plates, and top with the prawns and cashews.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • 2 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 287 kcs • fat 21g • saturates 4g
• carbs 5g • sugars 3g • fibre 4g • protein 18g •
salt 2.0g



ROMANCE IS ALL AROUND

It's all about romance at The Palace Downtown Dubai, where luxurious, magical dining experiences are on offer to ensure your Valentine's is one to remember. Set on the banks of Burj Lake, with its inviting warmth and charming Arabesque architecture; marvel at the magnificent Burj Khalifa through the mist of The Dubai Fountain. The Palace Downtown Dubai is one desirable destination for a thousand expressions of love to create everlasting memories, whether you're looking for a classic celebration, extravagant indulgences or an intimate dinner.

Love is in the air at Thiptara

Create treasured memories with your special someone as you delight in an exquisite 4-course plated dinner, overlooking the Dubai Fountain and Burj Khalifa at this al fresco waterfront restaurant. Romanic setup is a given, and ladies will receive a single rose and heart shaped chocolate, as well as a Valentine's Day card with a photo of the couple. And, for all the special ladies born with a birthday in the month of February, enjoy a complimentary red berry cocktail or mocktail.

Date: February 14, 2017

Time: 6pm to 12am

Price: Dhs750 per person, includes 4-course meal plated dinner, with 'For Him' and 'For Her' packages serving hops, red grape, white grape or flavourful mixes.

The ultimate and luxurious, Royal Romantic Getaway

In a day dedicated to the senses, together you will indulge in calming treatments and signature massages at the hands of expert therapists with The Royal Treatment comprising of a 60-minute facial and 60-minute full body massage. Or, for an equally relaxing treatment choose an aromatic oil and let the rest take care of itself with an 80-minute, head to toe massage. Whatever package you choose, the journey of luxury continues as you relax by the pool and refresh mind, body and soul in the hammam, steam room and Jacuzzi. Followed by a sparkling date juice, a chocolate-coated strawberry plate and cherished token from The Spa.

Date: February 1 to March 31, 2017

Time: 9am to 10pm

Price: Dhs1,050 per person and Dhs2,100 per couple for The Royal Treatment including 60-minute massage and 60-minute facial. Dhs850 per person and Dhs1,700 per couple for an 80-minute signature massage

Dine in bespoke luxury at the palace's private Valentine's experience

Display your love in the most remarkable way possible with an exquisite private dinner at The Palace Downtown Dubai. At a candle-lit table set for two, experience world-class cuisine paired with unparalleled views of the Burj Khalifa and the dancing fountains, as well as romantic notes from a violinist.

Date: February 1 to 28, 2017

Time: 7pm to 11pm

Price: Dhs25,000 per couple



Valentine's Delight Afternoon Tea at Al Bayt

Surprise your partner and satisfy your sweet tooth in one sitting with Al Bayt's exclusive Valentine's Chocolate Afternoon Tea Buffet. Indulge in a delectable selection of chocolates and desserts, and relax into the romantic ambiance created by the gentle notes of a violinist and harpist.

Date: February 1 – 28, 2017, every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday

Time: 2pm to 6pm

Price: Dhs160 per person

Starry-eyed dinner with Argentinean flair at Asado

Under the glow of candle light and against views of the awe-inspiring Dubai Fountains, enjoy a special crafted Argentinean menu selection dedicated to the month of romance in the company of your loved one. A live band will elevate the mood further still, with a selection of Argentinean love songs.

Date: February 1 to 28, 2017

Time: 6pm to 12pm

Price: Specially crafted a la carte menu available throughout the month

Dinner dash

Tortilla wraps

Fast and simple, these tortilla suppers are inspired by classic dishes from around the globe

recipes ADAM BUSH *photographs* MIKE ENGLISH

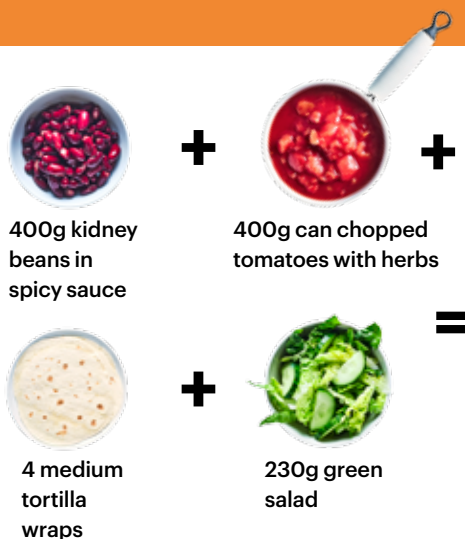
Muffin tin chilli pots

SERVES 2 **V**

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Simmer the beans and tomatoes in a pan for 15 mins, then season.

Meanwhile, grease four holes of a muffin tin with oil. Line each with a tortilla, making a cup, and fill with a ball of foil. Bake for 5 mins until lightly crisped. Remove the foil, divide the bean mix between the tortilla cups and serve with the green salad.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre • 3 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 625 kcs • fat 21g • saturates 6g •
carbs 78g • sugars 17g • fibre 16g • protein 23g • salt 3.2g



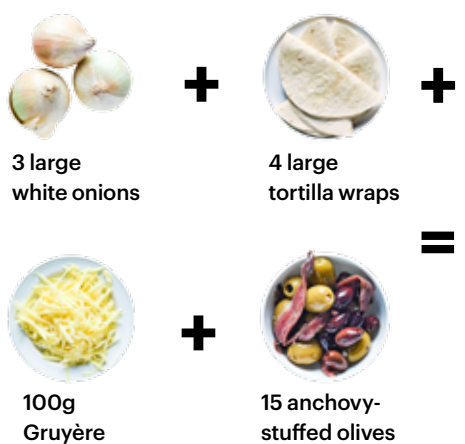
Cheat's pissaladière

SERVES 2

Finely slice the onions and gently cook with a glug of oil and a pinch of salt in a frying pan for 20 mins.

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Put 2 of the wraps on a baking tray and divide the Gruyère between them. Top each with another tortilla, then the onions. Halve the olives and scatter on top with the anchovies. Sprinkle over the remaining Gruyère and bake for 5-10 mins until crisp.

GOOD TO KNOW 2 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 674 kcs • fat 29g • saturates 14g •
carbs 74g • sugars 12g • fibre 8g • protein 25g • salt 3.6g



Katsu curry wrap

SERVES 4

Cook the goujons following pack instructions. Heat the katsu sauce in a small pan until piping hot.

Once the chicken is cooked and golden, chop into bite-sized pieces and toss with the sauce. Warm the tortillas in the microwave, then layer with the chicken and raw veg, roll up and eat.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre
PER SERVING 569 kcs • fat 25g • saturates 5g •
carbs 60g • sugars 12g • fibre 7g • protein 23g • salt 2.2g



INTRODUCING OUR

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/alislamifoods

Raise the steaks

Valentine's Day
February 14

If ever there was a piece of meat made for two to share, it's a thick-cut steak. We've taken inspiration from around the world to create three very special suppers

Recipes BARNEY DESMAZERY AND CHELSIE COLLINS Photographs TOBY SCOTT

All-American T-bone

The T-bone is a favourite American cut, taken from the sirloin. The steak includes a T-shaped bone with meat on each side (fillet on one side and sirloin on the other), making this perfect for sharing. Pair this juicy steak with all-American onion rings and a lettuce wedge salad for the ultimate steak dinner for two.

SERVES 2 PREP 5 mins
COOK 12 mins EASY

700g/1lb 9oz T-bone steak
(see our guide to steak cuts, p132)
2 garlic cloves, bashed
½ small pack thyme
½ tbsp olive oil
50g/2oz butter

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Put an ovenproof griddle pan on a high heat. Season the steak on both sides, then rub both sides with the garlic cloves, thyme and olive oil. Put the steak in the hot pan and char the underside for 2 mins or until griddle lines appear. Turn the steak over to brown the other side, rub the top with the thyme again, then lay the thyme and garlic on top of the meat.
2 Once evenly browned all over with griddle lines, put the thyme and garlic to one side, hold the steak with a pair of tongs to cook its fatty side and render it down so it's soft rather than gristly. This will take a few mins. Lay the steak flat again, put the thyme, garlic and butter on top and transfer the pan to the oven to finish cooking

for 4-5 mins, until the meat reaches 62-65C on a probe thermometer (or until cooked to your liking).

3 Rest the meat for 5-6 mins. Serve on a board or large plate in the middle of the table.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free
PER SERVING 808 kcals • fat 64g • saturates 31g •
carbs 1g • sugars none • fibre none • protein 57g •
salt 0.6g

Iceberg wedge salad with blue cheese dressing

SERVES 2 PREP 10 mins NO COOK
EASY V

50ml/2fl oz buttermilk
50g/2oz soured cream
50g/2oz mayonnaise
1 tsp lemon juice
75g/2½oz blue cheese, crumbled
½ small pack chives, snipped
1 iceberg lettuce, washed and quartered
25g/1oz walnuts, toasted and chopped

1 Make the dressing in a medium-sized bowl by combining the buttermilk, soured cream, mayonnaise, lemon juice and 50g of the blue cheese. Season and stir through the chives. Chill until ready to serve.

2 When ready to serve, pour half the dressing over the lettuce wedges and crumble over the remaining blue cheese and a scattering of walnuts. Serve the rest of the dressing on the side.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • folate • 1 of 5 a-day
PER SERVING 516 kcals • fat 46g • saturates 16g •
carbs 8g • sugars 8g • fibre 3g • protein 15g • salt 1.1g

Best-ever onion rings

Soaking the onion slices in buttermilk takes the raw edge off them so they taste more mellow.

SERVES 2 PREP 15 mins plus soaking
COOK 3-4 mins LITTLE EFFORT V ?

2 onions, sliced into 1cm/½in-thick rounds
400ml/14fl oz buttermilk
140g/5oz plain flour
½ tsp cayenne pepper
vegetable oil, for deep-frying
50g/2oz cornflour
150ml/¼pt lager
flaked sea salt, to serve

1 Put the onions in a large bowl, pour over the buttermilk and cover with cling film. Leave to soak at room temperature for 30 mins-1 hr.

2 Put 100g of the plain flour on a large plate and stir in the cayenne with a little seasoning. Drain the onion rings, then coat in the seasoned flour.

3 Half-fill a large saucepan with the oil and heat until it reaches 180C on a probe thermometer (or until a piece of bread crisps in 20-30 secs) or heat a deep fat fryer to 180C. Make the batter by combining the remaining plain flour with the cornflour and a pinch of salt. Make a well in the centre and pour in the lager. Stir to combine until smooth.

4 Dip each onion ring in the batter and fry for 3-4 mins or until crisp. Drain on kitchen paper and sprinkle with the salt.

GOOD TO KNOW 1 of 5 a-day • good for you
PER SERVING 498 kcals • fat 14g • saturates 2g •
carbs 77g • sugars 8g • fibre 5g • protein 9g • salt 0.6g



If there's one dish you'll find in most Parisian bistros, it's steak & chips

Onglet with red wine shallots

Onglet is also called hanger steak. It delivers lots of flavour and is best cooked rare to keep it tender.

SERVES 2 PREP 20 mins COOK 30 mins EASY

85g/3oz butter
400g/14oz piece of onglet steak
(see our guide on page 132),
trimmed into a neat 'fillet',
trimmings reserved and chopped
2 banana shallots, 1 finely chopped,
1 finely sliced into rings
1 thyme sprig
1 bay leaf
½ tsp plain flour
300ml/½pt red wine
handful finely chopped parsley,
to serve
Dijon mustard, to serve

1 To make the base for the sauce, heat a third of the butter in a shallow pan and sizzle the meat trimmings, chopped shallots and herbs until lightly browned. Scatter over the flour, cook for a few mins until pasty, then pour over the wine and boil until reduced by half and slightly syrupy. Strain the sauce through a fine sieve into a jug and set aside until needed. Can be made up to 2 days in advance, covered and chilled.

2 Heat another third of the butter in a frying pan until sizzling. Fry the well-seasoned steak in the butter for about 12 mins in total so it's caramelised on all sides. This cut of meat only suits being cooked to a maximum of 15 mins for medium – 12 mins will give you rare. Remove the meat from the pan and leave to rest.

3 Add a touch more butter to the pan and cook the sliced shallots until caramelised. Pour in the prepared sauce, bring back to a simmer and stir in any remaining butter. Taste the sauce for seasoning and turn off the heat.

4 Carve the steak into slices across the grain and place on a platter. Spoon over

the saucy shallots and pour over the reserved sauce. Scatter over the parsley and serve with the chips and mustard.

GOOD TO KNOW iron

PER SERVING 698 kcals • fat 46g • saturates 27g • carbs 2g • sugars 1g • fibre 1g • protein 42g • salt 0.9g

Cheat's real chips

SERVES 2 PREP 10 mins COOK 25-30 mins EASY

450g/1lb Maris Piper potatoes,
cut into chunky chips
sunflower oil, for frying
(about 300ml/½pt)
flaky sea salt

1 To cook the chips, put them in a sturdy saucepan that holds them in a double layer and still has plenty of space above them. Pour over enough cold oil to cover them by about 2cm. Put the pan on a high heat and bring the oil to the boil, stirring the chips with a wooden spoon occasionally so they don't stick.

2 After about 20 mins the oil will clear and the chips will look like they are frying. Keep an eye on them, stirring with the spoon occasionally until golden and crisp. Scoop them out with a slotted spoon into a dish lined with kitchen paper, and season with flaky sea salt. Serve with the steak.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre • good for you • gluten free

PER SERVING 442 kcals • fat 15g • saturates 1g • carbs 64g • sugars 1g • fibre 6g • protein 9g • salt 0.1g





Seared sirloin with Japanese dips

Wagyu beef, popular in Japan, is prized for the marbling of fat that runs through it. It's expensive and hard to find, so the best British cut to replicate it is sirloin.

This recipe is based on the southern Japanese dish tataki, which means 'hit into pieces'

SERVES 2 PREP 25 mins COOK 10 mins EASY

400g/14oz whole piece of sirloin, trimmed of excess fat
1 tbsp sunflower oil
thumb-sized piece ginger, finely grated
¼ cucumber, peeled and cut into matchsticks
small handful mustard cress
2 tsp toasted sesame seeds
cooked sticky rice, to serve (optional)

For the ponzu dipping sauce

4 tbsp soy sauce
juice 1 lime
large pinch of chilli flakes
small pinch of white sugar

For the wasabi cream

1 tbsp wasabi
5 tbsp soured cream

1 Rub the beef generously with oil and season well. Heat a heavy frying pan and sear the beef on all sides for about 8 mins in total for very rare, 10 mins for rare and 12 mins for medium-rare. Remove from the pan and set aside.

2 While the meat is resting, prepare the accompaniments. For the ponzu dipping sauce, mix all the ingredients together with a splash of water until the sugar has dissolved, then set aside. For the wasabi cream, stir the ingredients together until completely mixed, then set aside.

3 After the beef has rested for 10 mins, use your sharpest knife to carve it into thin slices. Fan the slices out on a serving platter, scatter with the cucumber, then the cress, followed by the sesame seeds. Bring to the table with the two sauces and the ginger in small serving dishes for dipping and spreading over the beef slices. Serve with chopsticks and sticky rice on the side, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW iron

PER SERVING 465 kcal • fat 28g • saturates 11g • carbs 8g • sugars 5g • fibre 1g • protein 46g • salt 5.8g

gf

3 steps to steak heaven

Apply these three golden rules to any steak you cook and you should have great results every time:

1 Make sure your meat is at room temperature before cooking – this ensures it cooks evenly.

2 Get your pan hot enough to seal and brown the meat properly, so it's more flavoursome.

3 Rest a thick-cut steak before serving to retain its juices.

Food styling CHARLIE CLAPP | Styling SARAH BIRKS







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FIVE TWISTS

Oyster toppings

Fresh oysters nestled on crushed ice are one of life's decadent yet affordable luxuries. Spoon over one of these inventive festive toppings to impress your guests

Cocktail club

Cut the peel from **1 preserved lemon** and chop very finely. Stir in **1 tbsp Campari** and **2 fresh orange juice**. Stir, then add to **6 freshly shucked oysters** and serve immediately.

Japanese inspired

Very finely chop **3 sprigs coriander**, **1 small red chilli**, deseeded, and **1 tsp sushi ginger**. Stir in the juice of **1/2 lime**, then spoon over **6 freshly shucked oysters**. Top each with a pinch of **crispy onions**.

Scandi-style

Mix together **1/4 pack dill**, chopped, with **1 tsp small capers** and the **juice and zest of 1 lemon**. Add to **6 freshly shucked oysters** and serve straight away.

Middle Eastern

Combine **25g pomegranate seeds**, the **zest and juice of 1 lime** and **1 tbsp pomegranate molasses**. Serve alongside **6 freshly shucked oysters** to drizzle over before eating.

Mediterranean chic

Very finely chop **1 small celery stick** and mix with **2 tbsp dry vermouth**. Divide between **6 freshly shucked oysters** to serve.



Oysters *for two*

photograph SAM STOWELL

Barbecued oysters with garlic, paprika & Parmesan butter

You can also use large green-shelled mussels for this recipe.

SERVES 4 **PREP 30 mins** **COOK 10 mins** **EASY**

12 rock oysters
chunks of bread, to serve (optional)
For the butter
60g butter, at room temperature
1 tsp parsley leaves
50g Parmesan, grated
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp cayenne pepper
2 tsp smoked paprika
1 tsp onion powder

1 In a small bowl, beat the butter until it's completely soft, then add the remaining ingredients. Lay a piece of cling film out on a clean work surface. Spoon the butter into the centre, then roll up tightly into a sausage shape. Keep in the fridge until ready to use. *Will keep for a week in the fridge or up to 3 months in the freezer.*

2 Light the barbecue and let it burn until the coals are glowing white-hot. Now shuck your oysters. Fold a tea towel into a strip and lie it on a firmly positioned chopping board (held in place underneath by some damp kitchen towel). Put the oysters on the towel, curved-side down, and wrap the tea towel over to sandwich it. Use a strong knife, preferably a shucking knife, to firmly pierce the hinge of the oyster, then turn it to open the oyster until you hear it pop. Work the knife around the edge of the shell, being careful not to cut into the oyster, until you can remove the lid. Disconnect the oyster from its shell on the bottom so it slides out easily.

3 Slice a round of the butter on top of each oyster and put on the barbecue, grilling for 6 mins or until bubbling. Serve with some chunks of bread to mop up the juices, if you like.

PER SERVING 196 kcals • fat 17g • saturates 10g • carbs 2g • sugars 1g • fibre 1g • protein 8g • salt 0.6g





Salmon *splendor*

Serve this citrus-spiked salmon with seasonal sides for a relaxed weekend meal. Plus two ideas for your leftovers

recipes ROSIE BIRKETT photographs HELEN CATHCART



Roast salmon with preserved lemon

Lightly curing the salmon with preserved lemon-flavoured gin gives the fish a deep citrus note. It also draws out moisture and firms up the flesh to give lovely flakes. Roasted salmon is often a dry, joyless affair – marred by white albumin (the proteins in the fish that congeal as you cook it) leaching out. This quick cure minimises that white stuff too.

SERVES 4 plus leftovers **PREP** 50 mins
plus at least 2 hrs marinating
COOK 25 mins **MORE EFFORT** 🍴

40g preserved lemon, flesh and pith removed
100ml gin
1kg side organic farmed or wild salmon (tail end)
50g sea salt
50g golden caster sugar
1 tsp thyme leaves
1 tsp chilli flakes
½ small bunch dill, washed
For the preserved lemon roasting oil
30g preserved lemons, seeds removed
4 tbsp olive oil

1 In a food processor, blitz together the lemon and gin. Lay your salmon skin-side down in a roasting tin and pour over the lemon and gin mix. Combine the salt, sugar, thyme and chilli flakes, then spoon over the salmon. Cover with cling film and chill for at least 2 hrs.

2 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3. Thirty mins before you want to cook the fish, remove it from the fridge to come to room temperature. To make the roasting oil, blitz the preserved lemons and olive oil. Gently rinse the cure from the salmon and pat dry with kitchen paper. Lay it skin-side down in an oiled roasting tray and pour over the roasting oil, rubbing it all over the fish. Cover the tin tightly with foil and roast for 15 mins (along with the covered, pre-cooked gratin, recipe overleaf).

3 Remove the foil and return the fish to the oven for a further 10 mins. Take out of the oven and rest for 5 mins (save 300g of the salmon if you want to make the leftover recipes on page 84), then scatter over freshly torn dill, to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW omega-3 • gluten free

PER SERVING 397 kcal • fat 27g • saturates 5g •
carbs 1g • sugars 1g • fibre none • protein 35g • salt 1.0g



Fennel & potato gratin

As this takes much longer to cook than the fish, it's best to prep it ahead, then reheat it just before you dish up.

SERVES 4 **PREP 15 mins**
COOK 1 hr 10 mins **EASY** †

1 tbsp olive oil
1 bulb fennel, finely sliced (reserve the fronds)
squeeze of lemon juice
1 large garlic clove, crushed
200ml double cream
80ml vermouth or fino sherry
50ml semi-skimmed milk
butter, for greasing
600g floury potatoes (such as King Edward or Maris Piper), finely sliced

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Heat the olive oil in a frying pan or cast-iron skillet over a medium heat and sauté the fennel with a little seasoning for about 10 mins until caramelised and sweet. Take off the heat and squeeze over a little lemon juice. In a jug, combine the garlic, cream, vermouth or sherry and semi-skimmed milk.

2 Butter a medium-sized roasting tin or casserole dish. Put a layer of the potatoes on the bottom, followed by some of the fennel and a glug of the cream mixture. Season and continue to layer the potatoes, fennel, seasoning and cream mixture. Make sure the top layer of veg is coated in the mixture – press it down with a spatula if you need to – and top with the fennel fronds.

3 Roast in the oven for 35–40 mins, or until the potatoes are tender. Cover with foil and return to the oven for 10 mins when you cook the salmon or until piping hot.

GOOD TO KNOW vegetarian • gluten free

PER SERVING 440 kcals • fat 31g • saturates 18g • carbs 28g • sugars 4g • fibre 4g • protein 4g • salt 0.1g

Courgettes with mint & ricotta

The mellow flavours of this quick, simple side dish go beautifully with the fresh fish and punchy preserved lemon. It's also a lovely stand-alone lunch dish, served with toasted sourdough.

SERVES 4 **PREP 10 mins**
COOK 30 mins **EASY**

2 tbsp olive oil
2 tsp unsalted butter
4 large courgettes (I used a mixture of green and yellow), sliced
zest and juice 1 lemon
pinch of chilli flakes
70g ricotta
extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling
handful mint leaves, picked and roughly chopped

1 Heat a large, heavy non-stick frying pan or cast-iron skillet over a medium heat. Heat 1 tbsp of the oil and 1 tsp butter together and add half the courgettes in one layer. Cook for 2 mins, then turn the heat down to medium-low and cook for 5 more mins untouched, until the underside has a nice colour. Flip the courgettes, then grate over some lemon zest, pour over half the lemon juice and season with salt, pepper and chilli flakes. Cook for a further 5 mins or until very tender. Repeat the process with the remaining slices of courgette.

2 Transfer to a platter and top with spoonfuls of ricotta. Drizzle over some extra virgin olive oil and scatter over the mint to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW vegetarian • folate • vit c • 1 of 5-a-day • gluten free

PER SERVING 134 kcals • fat 11g • saturates 4g • carbs 3g • sugars 3g • fibre 2g • protein 4g • salt 0.1g



Two easy ideas for your leftovers



Samphire & lemony salmon linguine

Juicy, salty samphire works really well along with the tender fish in this lemony pasta dish. Samphire is easy to pick up from most fishmongers. If you live by the coast, try searching out some rock samphire, sea purslane or wild fennel for this recipe too.

SERVES 2 **PREP 10 mins** **COOK 15 mins** **EASY** 🍴

2 tbsp olive oil
½ small preserved lemon, flesh and pith scooped out, skin finely chopped
2 large shallots, finely chopped
½ red chilli, finely sliced
1 tbsp finely chopped parsley stalks (reserve the leaves, to serve)
small glass of rosé or white wine
175g linguine
80g samphire
100g leftover cooked salmon, flaked into large pieces
juice ½ lemon

1 Heat the olive oil in a heavy-bottomed, non-stick frying pan or skillet. Add the preserved lemon, shallot, chilli, parsley stalks and seasoning, and sweat for about 5 mins or until soft and fragrant. Pour in the wine and bubble for 1-2 mins.
2 Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to the boil. Add the linguine and cook following pack instructions until just al dente. Throw the samphire into the water with the linguine. Cook for 30 secs, then drain everything, reserving a few ladlefuls of the pasta water.
3 Add the linguine and samphire to the frying pan with half a ladle of the pasta water. Add the salmon and lemon juice, and stir thoroughly to combine into a sauce, adding a splash more of the water if needed. Season to taste. Divide between plates and grind over some extra black pepper. Garnish with more chopped parsley, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW omega-3

PER SERVING 554 kcal • fat 23g • saturates 4g • carbs 52g • sugars 5g • fibre 5g • protein 23g • salt 1.3g



Creamy salmon & dill fishcakes

These make a good dinner party starter or lunchtime dish, perked up with this fresh horseradish yogurt.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 20 mins plus at least 1 hr chilling **COOK** 35-40 mins
MORE EFFORT †

For the mixture

1 tbsp olive oil
80g unsalted butter
1 shallot, finely chopped
80g plain flour
1 tbsp sherry or vermouth
500ml semi-skimmed milk
pinch cayenne pepper
a little freshly grated nutmeg
zest ½ lemon plus 1 tbsp juice
200g leftover salmon, flaked into large pieces
½ bunch dill, finely chopped
salad, to serve

For frying

100g plain flour
1 egg, beaten
150g breadcrumbs
(panko if you can get them)
oil, for frying

For the horseradish yogurt

2 tsp horseradish sauce
6 tbsp full-fat Greek yogurt

1 Heat the oil and butter together over a medium heat in a saucepan and add the shallot. Fry for a few mins, then add the flour and stir until you have a thick paste. Stir in the vermouth or sherry. Gradually add the milk, stirring all the time over a low heat until you have a smooth, very thick sauce (a similar consistency to mashed potato). Add the cayenne, nutmeg and lemon zest, season to taste, then remove from the heat. Stir in the salmon, dill and lemon juice. Spread the mixture over a plate (to speed up cooling), cover and chill for at least 1 hr.

2 To make the fishcakes, put the flour, beaten egg and breadcrumbs in three separate bowls. Scoop a large spoonful of the fishcake mixture (each spoonful should weigh around 115g) and roll lightly between oiled hands to form a ball or roll, before flattening lightly. Drop into the flour to coat, followed by the egg and then the breadcrumbs.
3 Heat enough oil to cover the base of a large frying pan. Shallow-fry the fishcakes over a medium-low heat in small batches for 5-6 mins on either side or until golden brown and crispy. Drain on kitchen paper.
4 For the horseradish yogurt, stir the ingredients together in a bowl until smooth and season with a little salt. Serve the fishcakes with a dollop of the yogurt and a fennel salad.

GOOD TO KNOW vit c • omega-3

PER SERVING 884 kcals • fat 51g • saturates 20g • carbs 72g • sugars 11g • fibre 3g • protein 31g • salt 1.2g



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Spicy jerk potato & pineapple hash

This is full of punchy flavours, and very satisfying.

SERVES 4 PREP 15 mins

COOK 35 mins EASY

700g Maris Piper potatoes, cut into medium chunks
1 tbsp vegetable oil
4 rashers streaky bacon, cut into bite-sized pieces
40g unsalted butter
½ tbsp jerk seasoning
200g prepared pineapple chunks
4 large eggs
½ small pack coriander, torn
½ red chilli, thinly sliced

- 1 Bring a large pan of lightly salted water to the boil. Add the potatoes and boil for 7 mins, then drain and leave to steam-dry for 5 mins. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat and fry the bacon for 5 mins until crispy.
- 2 Add the butter to the pan along with the potatoes and seasoning, and fry over a medium heat, turning occasionally, for 12 mins. Nestle the pineapple chunks in the pan and cook for a further 3 mins.
- 3 Crack the eggs over the potatoes, cover the pan with a lid or large plate and cook for 5-6 mins over a medium-low heat until the whites are just set and the yolks are still runny. Finish with the coriander and a sprinkle of chilli.

PER SERVING 451 kcal • fat 26g • saturates 9g • carbs 36g • sugars 7g • fibre 3g • protein 17g • salt 1.2g

one-pan dinner

Whole baked ricotta with lentils & roasted cherry tomatoes

This one-pan dish is quick to prepare and will help you to hit your 5-a-day.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins

COOK 50 mins **EASY** **V**

6 banana shallots, quartered
90ml olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
1 large lemon, zested and juiced
small pack basil, roughly chopped
small pack dill, roughly chopped
2 x 250g pouches cooked Puy lentils
150g spinach
2 x 250g whole ricotta
400g cherry tomatoes on the vine

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Put the shallots in a medium-sized roasting tin, drizzle over 2 tbsp olive oil and season. Roast for 15 mins until golden brown and beginning to soften. Meanwhile, to make a dressing, whisk the remaining olive oil with the lemon zest and juice, stir through half the herbs and season.

2 Toss the lentils together with the shallots, spinach and 4 tbsp water. Put the ricotta in the centre of the roasting tin and lay the tomatoes around them. Drizzle the dressing

over the lentils and shake the tin a little to combine everything. Drizzle a little olive oil over the ricotta and season everything well. Return to the oven for 30-35 mins or until the ricotta is firm and lightly golden.

3 Serve the lentils in shallow bowls topped with spoonfuls of the creamy ricotta and sprinkled with the remaining herbs.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • fibre • vit c • 3 of 5-a-day

• gluten free

PER SERVING 604 kcal • fat 39g • saturates 12g • carbs 32g • sugars 8g • fibre 10g • protein 26g • salt 1.6g



3 of your 5-a-day

Sweet potato, peanut butter & chilli quesadillas

Crisp tortillas, soft smoky roasted veg and crunchy nuts give this simple meal lots of texture.

SERVES 2 **PREP** 15 mins

COOK 45 mins **EASY** **V**

3 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
1 tbsp smoked paprika
3 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for brushing
1 extra large ripe avocado
½ lime, zested and juiced, plus wedges to serve
2 tbsp crunchy peanut butter
4 small flour tortillas
sriracha chilli sauce, to taste
½ small pack coriander, torn

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Toss the sweet potatoes with the paprika and 2 tbsp olive oil in a roasting tin. Roast for 15 mins, tossing halfway through, until the potatoes are beginning to crisp.

2 Stone, peel and chop the avocado, tip into a bowl with the lime juice and zest, and season generously. Mash together with a fork and set aside. In a small bowl, combine the peanut butter and remaining olive oil. Set aside.

3 Heat a griddle pan or frying pan over a medium heat until very hot. Brush each tortilla on one side with the remaining oil. Place one tortilla, oiled-side down, in the pan and spread over half the peanut butter mixture, half the sweet potatoes, a little chilli sauce and half the

coriander. Top with another tortilla, oiled-side up. Press down with a heavy saucepan and cook for 2-3 mins each side until the quesadilla is crisp outside and warm in the middle. Repeat to make a second quesadilla, then cut each into quarters and serve with the crushed avocado and lime wedges.

GOOD TO KNOW vegan • fibre • vit c • iron •

2 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING 947 kcs • fat 51g • saturates 10g •
carbs 96g • sugars 30g • fibre 18g • protein 17g • salt 1.7g



vegan recipe



ready in 20 minutes



Coconut lamb & pistachio rice salad

This winter salad is warming and fragrant.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 10 mins **EASY**

100g pistachios, roughly chopped
40g coconut flakes
2 x 250g pouches microwave coconut rice
small pack coriander, leaves and stalks roughly chopped

2 small packs mint, leaves picked
2 limes, zested and juiced
4 tbsp olive oil
4 tbsp korma paste
4 lamb leg steaks
1 green chilli, finely sliced

1 Heat a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add the pistachios and coconut, and toast for 3 mins until the coconut is golden. Cook the rice following pack instructions. Mix the rice with two-thirds of the pistachios and coconut, then season. Whizz the coriander, mint, lime zest and juice, and olive oil in a small food processor or with a hand blender until smooth. Season, then add half to the rice salad, keeping the rest for drizzling.

2 Heat the grill to high. Brush the korma paste over each side of the lamb steaks, then season. Put the steaks on a lined baking tray and grill on each side for 3 mins so they are still slightly pink in the centre. Cut each steak into thin slices.

3 Spread the rice salad on a large serving dish and top with the sliced lamb. Drizzle over the remaining dressing and sprinkle with the remaining pistachio and coconut flakes. Finish with slices of chilli.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre • iron

PER SERVING 780 kcals • fat 52g • saturates 17g • carbs 34g • sugars 4g • fibre 7g • protein 40g • salt 1.4g



storecupboard supper

Green pesto minestrone

A generous grating of parmesan balances the citrus in this fresh, zesty soup.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 25 mins **EASY** **V**

2 tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 celery sticks, finely chopped
1.4 litres vegetable stock
2 small lemons, zested and juiced
170g orzo
120g frozen peas
250g frozen spinach
50g pesto
garlic flatbreads, to serve (optional)
60g parmesan (or vegetarian alternative), grated

1 Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the onion, celery and a pinch of salt, and fry for 8 mins until soft. Add the stock with the zest and juice of the lemons, and season. Stir in the orzo and cook for 5 mins, then add the peas and spinach, and cook for a further 5 mins. Swirl through the pesto and season.

2 Heat the flatbreads, if using, following pack instructions. Ladle the soup generously into bowls and top with a handful of parmesan. Serve with the flatbread to dip.

GOOD TO KNOW low cal • calcium • 2 of 5-a-day • good for you

PER SERVING 334 kcal • fat 17g • saturates 5g • carbs 24g • sugars 9g • fibre 8g • protein 19g • salt 1.4g

Haddock with cannellini beans & artichokes

Baking in parchment gently steams the fish and beans, keeping them tender.

SERVES 1 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 15 mins **EASY**

400g can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
1 small lemon, zested and juiced
1 small garlic clove, grated
1 tbsp roughly chopped parsley
2 tbsp olive oil
1 skinless haddock fillet
2 artichokes from a can, drained and halved

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. In a bowl, mix the beans, zest and juice of half the lemon, the garlic and parsley. Stir through 1 tbsp olive

oil and season to taste. Very lightly crush the beans with the back of a wooden spoon, keeping some of them whole.

2 Cut a large square of baking parchment, spoon the beans onto the centre and top with the fish. Scatter the artichokes around the fish, drizzle over the remaining olive oil, squeeze a little lemon juice over and season well. Bring both sides of the parchment upwards and fold together to create a tight seal, then twist the ends tightly (like a giant sweet).

3 Put the fish on a baking tray and bake in the oven for 13-15 mins or until the fish is just cooked.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre • 2 of 5-a-day • good for you • gluten free

PER SERVING 579 kcal • fat 24g • saturates 3g • carbs 36g • sugars 9g • fibre 17g • protein 45g • salt 0.8g


dinner for one



Creamy tarragon chicken & potato bake

Speed up the prep by using ready-made mash.

SERVES 6 **PREP** 15 mins

COOK 40 mins **EASY** 

60g unsalted butter
6 boneless, skinless chicken thighs,
cut into bite-sized pieces
80g smoked pancetta, cut into
small pieces
2 large onions, sliced
40g plain flour
500ml chicken stock
3 tbsp finely chopped tarragon
2-3 tbsp wholegrain mustard
4 tbsp double cream
2 x 450g packs fresh prepared
mashed potato
drizzle of olive oil

1 Melt 20g of the butter in a flameproof casserole dish over a medium heat. Season the chicken and add to the dish with the pancetta. Fry for 5 mins until the pancetta is crispy and the chicken browned and cooked through. Set aside in a bowl.

2 Lower the heat, add the remaining butter and, when it starts foaming, add the onions. Cook for 10 mins until softened, then stir through the flour and cook for another 2 mins. Remove from the heat and slowly whisk in the chicken stock. Return to the hob, bring to the boil and cook for 5 mins. Stir through the tarragon, mustard and cream, followed by the chicken and pancetta, and cook for another 5 mins until the sauce is thickened.

3 Heat the grill to high. Heat the mashed potato following pack instructions, then spoon on top of the chicken filling in the casserole dish. Smooth and swirl the potato over right to the edges, drizzle with a little olive oil and put under the grill for 8-10 mins or until the top is golden and bubbling.

GOOD TO KNOW 1 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING 564 kcal • fat 35g •
saturates 19g • carbs 35g • sugars 7g •
fibre 5g • protein 25g • salt 1.2g



one-pot meal

A VALENTINE'S

→ To →
REMEMBER



Looking for a special way to celebrate Valentine's Day this February 14? Whether you're single or in a relationship, ChefXChange's team of professional chefs are on hand to host your private dining experience, tailor-made to your needs. From a private dinner for two in the desert, to a mouthwatering BBQ for friends in the comfort of your own garden, ChefXChange allows you to customise your next romantic dinner or social gathering, without having to spend all night in the kitchen – because they'll take care of the hard work for you!

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Valentine's Day with your loved one

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♥ A private dinner for two at home

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Valentine's day with your friends

♥ A friendly group BBQ

Like Friendsgiving, ChefXChange encourages gathering a bunch of friends and having a non-traditional Valentine's Day celebration. The day is after all, all about love, right? Enjoy a beachside BBQ, or a party in your backyard, where ChefXChange chefs can provide top-notch meat and a delicious array of sides.



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NEW KITCHEN TRICKS

This month, Cassie Best reveals her best-kept kitchen secrets. Using technology, new methods and a little kitchen know-how, she shows you how to bring your cooking bang up to date

photographs SAM STOWELL

Whether you learned to cook at school or by watching Delia or Nigella, some kitchen rules will be familiar. 'Stir the risotto continuously', 'knead dough for 10 minutes to develop the gluten', 'cook pasta in a deep pan of boiling water'. But times and technology have changed, and so have the ways we cook.

So I'm rethinking the old school of cooking in these new recipes, each with a clever twist or trick to make them better, easier and more forward thinking. No pizza oven? No worries – a frying pan will do. Want perfect steak every time? Try the genius method on page 60. Welcome to the new school.





For the full recipe, see p56

Microwave Crab risotto with
Chilli Crab toasts

SERVES 4 PREP 10 mins COOK 15 mins EASY

For the risotto
1 tbsp olive oil
2 shallots, finely chopped
100g risotto rice
600ml white wine
100ml cold fish stock
juice brown crab meat
50g 1/2 lemon
50g mascarpone

For the toasts
1 small baguette, sliced on an angle
as thinly as possible
1 garlic clove, squashed
1 tbsp olive oil
100g white crab meat

1 red chilli
finely chopped

For the roasts
1 large hand
leaves to serve
2 tsp capers
zest and juice
4 tbsp extra
plus a drizzle

1) Put the oil
large, mix



One-pan pasta

Recipe, p60

Low'n' slow Steak

Recipe, p60





Pizza in the frying pan

Recipe, p56

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Made-over millionaire's bars

The new domestic goddess knows that you can use natural, nutrient-rich ingredients to create delicious treats, such as these vegan, gluten-free bars. They're just as sticky and moreish as the original versions.

MAKES 16 **PREP** 30 mins plus chilling
COOK 5 mins **MORE EFFORT**

For the base

150g cashew nuts
50g rolled oats
4 medjool dates, pitted
50g coconut oil, melted

For the filling

350g pitted medjool dates
125ml unsweetened almond milk
25ml maple syrup
150g coconut oil
1 tsp vanilla extract

For the topping

150g coconut oil
5 tbsp cocoa powder
2 tsp maple syrup

1 Grease a 20cm square cake tin and line with baking parchment. Tip the cashew nuts and oats into a food processor and blitz to crumbs. Add the dates and coconut oil, and blend again. Transfer to the tin and use a spoon to press the nutty mixture into a compact, even layer that covers the base. Chill while you prepare the filling.

2 For the filling, add the dates, almond milk, maple syrup and coconut oil to a saucepan with a

generous pinch of salt and bring to a simmer. Boil for 2-3 mins until the dates are really soft, then tip into the blender, add the vanilla extract and blitz to a smooth purée. Add a little more salt if the mixture is too sweet. Pour over the nutty base and spread to the sides of the tin, getting the surface as smooth as possible. Chill while you prepare the topping.

3 Gently heat the coconut oil in a saucepan until melted. Remove from the heat and whisk in the cocoa and maple syrup until there are no lumps. Cool for 10 mins, pour over the caramel layer and return to the fridge for at least 3 hrs or until firmly set. To serve, cut into squares. *Will keep in the fridge for up to 1 week.*

BENEFITS vegan • gluten-free

PER BAR 373 kcal • fat 28g • saturates 20g • carbs 25g • sugars 20g • fibre 3g • protein 4g • salt none

Slow cooker muscovado cheesecake with hazelnuts & blackberries

SERVES 10 **PREP** 30 mins plus cooling
COOK 2 hrs **MORE EFFORT**

50g butter, melted, plus extra for greasing

225g oat biscuits (such as Hobnobs)

100g blanched hazelnuts

250g light muscovado sugar

4 tbsp full-fat milk

750g full-fat cream cheese

2 tbsp plain flour

1 tsp vanilla extract

3 large eggs

200ml pot soured cream

1 tbsp Frangelico (optional)

2 tsp cornflour

3 tbsp golden caster sugar

200g blackberries

1 Boil the kettle and prepare your slow cooker (at least 22cm wide). Make a trivet for your cheesecake by scrunching a long piece of foil into a sausage. Roll into a loose coil and put on the bottom of the slow cooker. Turn the slow cooker to high and pour in enough hot water to come 4 cm up the sides. Wrap the outside of a 20cm springform cake tin in two layers of cling film and then foil – make sure there are no gaps for water to seep in. Grease the inside with butter, line with cling film and grease again, then line the base and sides with baking parchment.

2 Tip the biscuits and 50g hazelnuts into a food processor and blitz to fine crumbs. Add the butter and blend again until well combined. Tip the crumbs into the tin – use a spoon to press into the base. Chill for 10 mins.

3 In a saucepan, heat the muscovado and milk until the sugar has dissolved. Set aside to cool. In a bowl, beat the cream cheese, flour, vanilla and eggs until smooth. Stir in the soured cream, Frangelico (if using) and cooled sugar mixture until well combined. Pour into the tin and carefully put it in the slow cooker. Wrap the lid in a tea towel to prevent condensation from dripping onto the cheesecake. Cover and cook for 2 hrs, then turn off the slow cooker. Leave the cheesecake inside without opening for another 2 hrs. Remove from the slow cooker and cool at room temperature for a further 1 hr, then chill for 4 hrs, or overnight.

4 Put the cornflour, caster sugar and half the blackberries in a saucepan and set over a high heat. Cook for 3-4 mins, squashing the blackberries a little, until syrupy. Toss in the remaining berries, heat through, then remove from the heat and cool until you're ready to serve. Roughly chop the remaining nuts and toast in a frying pan.

5 To serve, carefully remove the cheesecake from the tin, remove the baking parchment and transfer to a plate or cake stand. Top with the berries and hazelnuts, and serve with a shot of Frangelico, if you like.

PER SERVING 612 kcal • fat 39g • saturates 19g • carbs 52g • sugars 40g • fibre 3g • protein 10g • salt 0.8g

No slow cooker? No problem

You can also bake this cheesecake. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 and boil the kettle. Create a foil trivet and put in a deep roasting tin. Prep the tin and cheesecake as before and put it on the trivet. Fill the tin halfway with hot water and put on the middle shelf.

Bake for 10 mins, then reduce the heat to 110C/90C fan/gas $\frac{1}{4}$ and cook for 30 mins more. Turn off the oven but keep the door closed for 1 hr, then open the door slightly and cool for another 1 hr. Chill for 4 hrs, or overnight, before serving as above.



Cheesecake in a slow cooker

The very best baked cheesecakes have a creamy texture and a smooth, uncracked surface. Cooking a cheesecake in a bain marie (water bath) at a low and steady temperature helps to achieve these perfect results, so slow cookers are also ideally suited. If you don't have one, don't fret – you can also cook our recipe in the oven (see box, left).



Microwave crab risotto with chilli crab toasts

This dinner party dish might just become your new kitchen secret.

Forget patiently stirring away at a pan for half an hour to create a perfect creamy risotto – this

cheat's version cooks in half the time, and the microwave does the hard work! You can make the salsa ahead or throw it together while the drinks are being poured.

SERVES 4 PREP 10 mins
COOK 15 mins EASY

For the risotto

1 tbsp olive oil
2 shallots, finely chopped
50ml white wine
300g risotto rice
600ml cold fish stock
100g brown crabmeat

juice ½ lemon
50g mascarpone

For the toasts

1 small baguette, sliced on an angle as thinly as possible
1 garlic clove, squashed
1 tbsp olive oil
100g white crabmeat
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped

For the rocket salsa

large handful rocket, finely chopped, plus a few leaves to serve
2 tsp capers, drained and finely chopped
zest and juice ½ lemon
4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus a drizzle

1 Put the oil and shallots in a large, microwaveable container with a pinch of salt and stir well. Cover with a lid or cling film and cook on high for 1 min. Add the white wine and cook for another 1 min uncovered. Stir in the rice and stock, season

well, then cover. Cook for another 10 mins, stirring every 2-3 mins. Mix in the brown crabmeat and the lemon juice, cover and cook for a final 2 mins, stirring halfway. Add the mascarpone, check the seasoning and add a splash of hot water if the risotto is too thick. Leave covered for another 1 min.

2 Meanwhile, make the toasts and salsa. Toast the baguette slices in a toaster or under the grill. Rub each piece with the garlic clove and drizzle with oil. Combine the white crabmeat and chilli, and season well. For the salsa, mix all the ingredients in a bowl, or blitz to a pesto consistency in a mini blender.
3 To serve, divide the risotto between bowls and drizzle over the salsa. Top each toast with a mound of chilli crab and put two on top of each bowl (serve any extras on the side). Scatter over a few rocket leaves and drizzle with a little more oil before serving.

PER SERVING 758 kcal • fat 27g • saturates 7g • carbs 96g • sugars 6g • fibre 4g • protein 28g • salt 1.7g



Frying pan pizza with aubergine, ricotta & mint

For a crisp pizza base, you need a smoking hot oven, a pizza stone or a wood-fired stove. If you don't have any of these, you may end up with a disappointingly

soggy base. However, my version is guaranteed to give you crispy-bottomed results without even turning on the oven.

SERVES 2 PREP 25 mins plus rising
COOK 35 mins EASY

For the dough

200g strong white bread flour, plus a little for dusting
½ tsp fast-action dried yeast
¼ tsp golden caster sugar
a little oil, for greasing

For the toppings

4 tbsp olive oil, plus a little extra
1 garlic clove, thinly sliced
200g passata
pinch of golden caster sugar (optional)
1 small aubergine, sliced into discs
100g ricotta

small handful mint, roughly chopped
extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling

1 Weigh the ingredients for the dough into a large bowl and add ½ tsp salt and 125ml warm water. Mix to form a soft dough, then tip onto your work surface and knead for 5 mins or until the dough feels stretchy. Clean and grease the bowl and return the dough. Cover with cling film and leave somewhere warm to rise for 1 hr, or until the dough has doubled in size.

2 Meanwhile, make the sauce. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a pan and add the garlic. Sizzle gently for 30 secs, making sure the garlic doesn't brown, then add the passata. Season well and bubble for 8-10 mins until you have a rich sauce – add a pinch of sugar if it tastes a little too tart. Set aside.

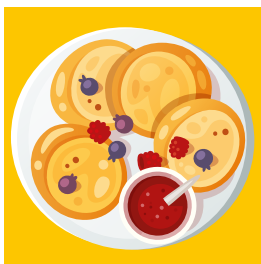
3 When the dough has risen, knock out the air and roll it into a pizza base the same size as a large frying pan. Oil the surface of the dough, cover with cling film, then leave on the work surface for 15 mins to puff up a little. Meanwhile, heat 2 tbsp oil in the frying pan and add the aubergines in a single layer (you

may have to cook in batches). Season well and cook for 4-5 mins on each side until really tender and golden. Transfer to a dish and cover with foil to keep warm.

4 Heat the remaining 1 tbsp of oil in the pan and carefully lift the dough into it. You may have to reshape it a little to fit. Cook over a low-medium heat until the underside is golden brown and the edges of the dough are starting to look dry and set – this should take about 6 mins, but it's best to go by eye. Flip over, drizzle a little more oil around the edge of the pan so it trickles underneath the pizza base, and cook for another 5-6 mins until golden and cooked through. Reheat the sauce if you need to and spread it over the base. Top with the warm aubergines and dot with spoonfuls of ricotta. Scatter with mint and drizzle with a little extra virgin olive oil just before serving.

BENEFITS vegetarian • calcium • folate • fibre • 2 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING 721 kcal • fat 31g • saturates 7g • carbs 85g • sugars 10g • fibre 9g • protein 20g • salt 1.4g



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No-knead grape & rosemary focaccia

Kneading dough helps to develop the gluten strands that give bread its bouncy texture. But a slow rise allows gluten to develop naturally, so there's no need to knead. This sticky, wet dough helps to produce the air bubbles characteristic of focaccia. It's great served warm with soft goat's cheese.

SERVES 8-10 PREP 10 mins plus rising and 10 hrs proving COOK 1 hr EASY

400g strong white bread flour
1 tsp fast-action dried yeast
4 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for greasing
1 tbsp flaky sea salt
200g red grapes
10 rosemary sprigs, roughly chopped
goat's cheese, to serve (optional)

1 Tip the flour, yeast, 1 tbsp olive oil and 1 tsp salt into a large bowl. Add 250ml warm water and mix with a wooden spoon to make a sticky dough. Cover with cling film and put in the fridge for at least 10 hrs, or up to 24 hrs.
2 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Toss the grapes in 1 tbsp olive oil in a roasting tin. Bake for 20 mins or until shriveled, then set aside to cool.
3 When the dough has doubled in size and is bubbly, remove from the fridge and leave at room temperature for 1 hr. Oil a 23cm square roasting tin and scrape the dough in. Oil your hands, then fold the dough in on itself like an envelope. Turn the tin and repeat to create a square shape, then flip so that the folds are underneath. Scatter the rosemary, grapes and remaining salt over and drizzle with 2 tbsp oil. Use your fingertips to create dimples in the dough, pressing in the toppings and spreading the dough to the corners. Cover with cling film and leave to rise for 1 hr or until almost doubled in size. Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7 at least 20 mins before you cook the bread.
4 Uncover the dough, drizzle with the remaining oil and bake on the middle shelf for 30 mins until golden brown. Cool for 10 mins in the tin before transferring to a wire rack, or eat warm.

BENEFITS vegan (excluding goat's cheese)
PER SERVING (10) 203 kcals • fat 5g • saturates 1g • carbs 33g • sugars 3g • fibre 2g • protein 5g • salt 1.5g

No-knead focaccia



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One-pan spaghetti with nduja, fennel & olives

Most decent pasta recipes will instruct you to reserve some of the cooking water to stir into your sauce at the end of cooking. The starch in the water helps the sauce to cling to the pasta and gives it more body.

This recipe takes this idea one step further, cooking the pasta and sauce all in one pan. What you get is a silky sauce and perfectly cooked pasta – and only one pan to wash up!

SERVES 4 PREP 15 mins
COOK 15 mins EASY

400g spaghetti
3 garlic cloves, very thinly sliced
½ fennel, halved and very thinly sliced
75g nduja or sobrasada paste (see box, right)
200g tomatoes (the best you can get), chopped into chunks
75g black olives, pitted and sliced
2 tsp tomato purée
3 tbsp olive oil, plus a drizzle

2 tsp red wine vinegar
40g pecorino, plus extra to serve
handful basil, torn

1 Boil the kettle. Put all the ingredients except the pecorino and basil in a wide saucepan or deep frying pan and season well. Pour over 800ml kettle-hot water and bring to a simmer, using your tongs to ease the spaghetti under the liquid as it starts to soften.

2 Simmer, uncovered, for 10-12 mins, tossing the spaghetti through the liquid every so often until it is cooked and the sauce is reduced and clinging to it. Add a splash more hot water if the sauce is too thick or does not cover the pasta while it cooks. Turn up the heat for the final few mins to drive off the excess liquid, leaving you with a rich sauce. Stir through the pecorino and basil, and serve with an extra drizzle of oil and pecorino on the side.

BENEFITS fibre • 1 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 608 kcal • fat 25g • saturates 7g • carbs 72g • sugars 4g • fibre 7g • protein 20g • salt 1.4g



Nduja, a spicy, spreadable salami paste from Calabria, in Italy, is available at ocado.com and from delis. Sobrasada, which is the Spanish equivalent, has the flavour of chorizo. Find it in selected supermarkets or delis. Or you can use finely chopped chorizo instead.



Low 'n' slow rib steak with Cuban mojo salsa

Cooking an expensive steak can cause even the most experienced of chefs to sweat. To ensure great results every time, most restaurants cook their steaks in sous vides (temperature-controlled water baths), which heat the meat to the ideal temperature, meaning it will never overcook. You can get the same results at home with this low & slow method – steak heaven without the stress!

SERVES 2 PREP 20 mins
COOK 3 hrs 20 mins MORE EFFORT

1 rib steak on the bone or côte du boeuf (about 800g)
1 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 garlic clove
2 thyme sprigs
25g butter, chopped into small pieces
sweet potato fries (for a recipe visit bbcgoodfoodme.com) and a dressed salad, to serve

For the mojo salsa

2 limes
1 small orange
½ small bunch mint, finely chopped
small bunch coriander, finely chopped
4 spring onions, finely chopped
1 small garlic clove, crushed
1 fat green chilli, finely chopped
4 tbsp extra virgin rapeseed or olive oil

1 Leave the beef at room temperature for about 1 hr before you cook it. Heat oven to 60C/40C fan/gas ½ if you like your beef medium rare, or 65C/45C fan/gas ¾ for medium. (Cooking at these low temperatures will be more accurate in an electric oven than in a gas one. If using gas, put the oven on the lowest setting you have, and be aware that the cooking time may be shorter.)

2 Put the unseasoned beef in a heavy-based ovenproof frying pan. Cook in the middle of the oven for 3 hrs undisturbed.

3 Meanwhile, make the salsa. Zest the limes and orange into a bowl. Cut each in half and place, cut-side

down, in a hot pan. Cook for a few mins until the fruits are charred, then squeeze the juice into the bowl. Add the other ingredients and season well.

4 When the beef is cooked, it should look dry on the surface, and dark pink in colour. If you have a meat thermometer, test the internal temperature – it should be 58-60C. Remove the pan from the oven and set over a high heat on the hob. Add the oil and sear the meat on both sides for a few mins until caramelised. Sear the fat for a few mins too. Smash the garlic clove with the heel of your hand and add this to the pan with the thyme and butter. When the butter is foaming, spoon it over the beef and cook for another 1-2 mins. Transfer the beef to a warm plate, cover with foil, and leave to rest for 5-10 mins. Carve away from the bone and into slices before serving with the salsa, fries and salad.

BENEFITS vit c • iron • gluten free
PER SERVING 1,001 kcal • fat 75g • saturates 22g • carbs 4g • sugars 3g • fibre 1g • protein 76g • salt 0.7g

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MASTERCHEF MAKEOVER

Thai curry

This month BBC *MasterChef* judge John Torode takes one of our most highly rated curries at bbcgoodfoodme.com and gives it a Thai twist

photograph PETER CASSIDY



Good Food's contributing editor John Torode is a chef, food writer and TV presenter, and has been a judge on *MasterChef* for 11 years. Every month he reinvents one of the most popular recipes from our website. [@JohnTorode1](https://twitter.com/JohnTorode1)

I love a homemade curry, and *Good Food's* chicken, sweet potato & coconut curry is quick to make and deservedly a hit. But I wanted to give the recipe additional authentic flavours, so I've added some dried lime leaves, lemongrass and ginger, plus some Thai red curry paste.

The wider availability of Thai and other south-east Asian ingredients has made it so much easier to cook dishes like this at home. The secret is the way you make it – sauce first and chicken in last. You need to get flavour from the sauce, then simply poach the chicken in it, otherwise the chicken will be overcooked and the sauce lacking in flavour.

Done right, this clever little chicken curry should transport you to street markets of Bangkok or one of the nearby southern islands.

John's Thai chicken curry

The raw beansprouts add great texture to this dish, and I love the fiery heat from the fresh chilli. If you like it extra hot, serve with a spicy Thai chilli sauce.

SERVES 2 PREP 10 mins
COOK 25 mins EASY

1 tbsp vegetable oil
400ml can coconut milk
1 tbsp Thai red curry paste (I like the ones that come in plastic tubs – Mae Ploy is a good brand)
2 garlic cloves, grated
thumb-sized piece ginger, grated
6 fresh or dried lime leaves
2 lemongrass stalks, bashed
1 chicken stock cube
1 tsp palm sugar
1 sweet potato, peeled and cut into chunks
1 tsp Thai fish sauce
handful coriander leaves
handful beansprouts
2 long red chillies, sliced
2 dried rice noodle nests (100g)
2 chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces

1 In a large, heavy-based pan, heat the vegetable oil with 1 tbsp of the coconut milk. When it's hot and starting to

splatter, add the red curry paste. Stir and cook gently over a medium-low heat for 1-2 mins – it should start to change colour. Add the garlic, ginger, lime leaves and lemongrass, and turn up the heat a little. Stir and smell it – it will start to change from the smell of raw garlic and spices to roasted ones. As it turns dark red, add the stock cube and the palm sugar – it will melt and become even darker and richer. Add the sweet potato and the fish sauce, then stir until coated in the paste. Add the coconut milk and 200ml water. Stir, bring to the boil, then turn down to a simmer and cook for 12 mins.
2 Meanwhile, mix the coriander, beansprouts and chilli. Cook and drain the noodles following pack instructions, then tip into in a large serving bowl. Taste the curry and season with some more fish sauce or sweeten with a little sugar if necessary. Turn up the heat and bring to the boil, then tip the chicken into the sauce. Return to the boil and simmer for 5-7 mins.

3 Remove the lemongrass, then spoon the chicken over the noodles and sprinkle with the coriander, chilli and beansprouts to serve.

BENEFITS 1 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 830 kcals • fat 43g • saturates 30g • carbs 69g • sugars 14g • fibre 5g • protein 37g • salt 2.6g



Planet *pancake*

SHROVE
TUESDAY

February 28


Go global on Pancake Day with
Cassie Best's recipes *Photographs* SAM STOWELL



Chocolate-filled pancakes
with caramelised banana, p68



Sweet potato
masala dosa with
coconut raita, p67



Crispy pancakes
with creamy chicken
& bacon, p68

'Pancakes are popular the world over, from pillowy sweet breakfasts, American style, to savoury street food snacks across India and Asia. Why not cook up something different on Pancake Day this year?'



Sweet potato masala dosa with coconut raita

Dosas are thin savoury pancakes, traditionally made from fermented rice and lentils that have been ground to a paste and mixed with water. This vegetarian dish originates in southern India, where it's often eaten for breakfast and served with chutney, sambar (lentil & tamarind stew) or a spiced potato filling, which transforms it into a masala dosa.

Getting a crispy paper-thin texture at home is tricky, but I get good results by combining gram (chickpea) flour and plain flour.

SERVES 4 PREP 40 mins plus 24 hrs chilling COOK 50 mins EASY V*

For the dosa

100g/4oz gram flour

100g/4oz plain flour

200ml/7fl oz milk

For the masala filling

4 sweet potatoes (about

750g/1lb 10oz), peeled and chopped into small cubes

3 tbsp vegetable or sunflower oil

2 tsp each black mustard seeds, fennel seeds and cumin seeds

1 fat red chilli, chopped (deseeded if you don't like it too hot)

1 large onion, halved and thinly sliced

'In India, you'll see street vendors swirling the thin batter over a hot pan – a tava – in the same manner as the French do with crêpes'

4 garlic cloves, crushed
thumb-sized piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped
small bunch coriander, stalks only, finely chopped (save the leaves for the raita)

2 tbsp fresh or dried curry leaves

1 tsp each ground turmeric and ground coriander

Indian chutneys and pickles, to serve

For the raita

200g/7oz fresh coconut, coarsely grated

125g pot coconut yogurt (I used CoYo)

small bunch coriander, leaves only, finely chopped (reserve a few leaves to serve)

zest 1 lime, juice of ½, the other ½ cut into wedges to serve

1 For the best flavour and texture, the dosa pancake batter is best made at least 24 hrs ahead. Measure the flours into a large bowl, add the milk, season with salt and add 300ml water. Whisk to a smooth batter, then cover with cling film and chill for 24 hrs or up to 5 days.

2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Toss the sweet potato in a drizzle of the oil and spread out on a large baking tray. Cook for 20 mins, stirring on the tray once or twice during cooking, until soft and starting to caramelize. Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil in a large pan and fry the mustard, fennel and cumin seeds for 30 secs or so until fragrant. Stir in the chilli, onion, garlic, ginger, coriander stalks and curry leaves, and cook over a low heat for 10 mins until the onion is really soft. Stir in the ground spices for 15 secs, then add 100ml water and bubble to bring all the flavours together.

3 Stir the sweet potato into the pan and season well. Use the back of your spoon to crush some of the sweet potato, leaving some pieces

chunkier – the mixture should resemble very chunky mash. Keep the mixture warm until the pancakes are ready (or leave it to cool, then chill for up to 2 days – gently reheat in the pan or microwave before continuing).

4 To make the raita, put the grated coconut in a bowl, stir in the coconut yogurt, coriander, lime zest and juice, and a pinch of salt. If the yogurt is very thick, loosen it with 1-2 tbsp water. Chill until ready to serve (you can make this up to 2 days ahead too, but stir in the coriander just before serving).

5 Heat the oven to its lowest setting and put a plate inside ready to keep the dosas warm once you've cooked them. If the dosa batter has thickened in the fridge, thin it with a splash of water – it should be the consistency of double cream. Use a little oil to grease your largest frying or crêpe pan, wiping out the excess oil with some kitchen paper. Pour a ladleful of batter into the centre of the pan and quickly swirl it around to fill the surface, getting the pancakes as thin as you can. When the surface of the pancake looks almost dry, spoon a quarter of the filling down the centre. When the pancake is deep golden-brown and crisp on the underside, roll it up in the pan to encase the filling, cook for 1 min more, then transfer to the oven to keep warm while you continue cooking the remaining dosas.

6 Any leftover batter will keep well in the fridge for 4 days (if the batter was made the day before, don't keep for longer than 5 days in total). Serve the dosas with the coconut raita, lime wedges and remaining coriander leaves, with your favourite Indian chutneys and pickles on the side.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • fibre • vit c • iron • 2 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING 803 kcaIs • fat 36g • saturates 22g • carbs 96g • sugars 35g • fibre 18g • protein 16g • salt 0.4g

Chocolate-filled pancakes with caramelised banana

American-style pancakes have become hugely popular internationally. Thicker and fluffier than traditional British pancakes, they soak up syrup like sponges and go so well with crispy bacon or banana.

SERVES 4 PREP 25 mins COOK 30 mins A LITTLE EFFORT V *

200g/7oz self-raising flour
1½ tsp baking powder
3 tbsp golden caster sugar
3 large eggs
25g/1oz melted butter, plus extra for cooking
200ml/7fl oz milk
drizzle of vegetable or sunflower oil
200g/7oz chocolate hazelnut spread
2 large bananas, peeled and thickly sliced on an angle
maple syrup and 4 tbsp toasted chopped hazelnuts, to serve

1 To make the pancake batter, mix the flour, baking powder, 1 tbsp sugar and a pinch of salt in a large bowl with a whisk. Make a well in the centre, crack in the eggs and add the melted butter and milk. Whisk the wet ingredients in the centre until combined, then gradually incorporate the dry ingredients until you have a thick, smooth batter. Transfer to a jug (or see tip, right). Heat the oven to its lowest setting and put a couple of baking trays in to keep the pancakes warm as you cook them.

2 Heat a knob of butter and a drizzle of oil in a large, non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. When the butter is foaming, pour rounds of batter into the pan, about 8cm wide – leave space between them as they will expand as they cook. Scoop teaspoons of chocolate spread from the jar and pop one in the centre of each pancake, then use a tiny bit more batter to just cover the

chocolate spread. Continue cooking for 1-2 mins until the underside is golden brown, then carefully flip the pancakes and cook for 1 min more on the other side. When golden, transfer to a baking tray and keep warm in the oven while you cook the next batch.

3 When the pancakes are all cooked, caramelise the bananas. Wipe the frying pan clean with kitchen paper and scatter in the remaining 2 tbsp sugar. Heat the sugar until it melts and starts to bubble to a deep amber colour, then toss in the bananas and coat them in the caramel. If the sugar hardens, drizzle in a little maple syrup or water, then bubble for 30 secs until syrupy.

4 Serve the pancakes stacked with the caramelised banana pieces between the layers and more piled on top. Drizzle over the maple syrup, then scatter over the hazelnuts.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • fibre

PER SERVING 797 kcals • fat 37g • saturates 12g • carbs 94g • sugars 57g • fibre 6g • protein 18g • salt 14g



Perfect American-style pancakes

- If you have a disposable piping bag, snip off the end and use it to smoothly pipe the uncooked batter into the pan.
- Want to flip like a pro? Turn to page 131 for our top tips.

Crispy pancakes with creamy chicken & bacon

This recipe is in homage to a schooldays favourite of mine. My mum always served them on Friday nights after swimming – we'd come home ravenous and the crispy pancakes filled with creamy chicken always did the trick.

SERVES 4 PREP 40 mins plus cooling COOK 50 mins EASY * □

For the filling

2 tbsp olive or rapeseed oil
2 chicken breasts
200g pack smoked bacon lardons
1 onion, chopped
200g/7oz chestnut mushrooms, finely chopped
3 tbsp flour
400ml/14fl oz milk
handful parsley, chopped

For the pancakes

100g/4oz plain flour
2 large eggs, plus 1 beaten for brushing
150ml/¼ pt milk
50g/2oz breadcrumbs
salad or baked beans, to serve (optional)

1 Heat 1 tbsp oil in a large frying pan. Cook the chicken breasts for 5-8 mins each side until golden brown and

cooked through, then transfer to a plate. Tip the lardons into the pan and sizzle for a few mins until crispy, then tip out onto the plate with the chicken.

2 If the pan looks dry, add the remaining oil, then the onion. Cook for 5 mins until softened and translucent, then stir in the mushrooms and some seasoning. Cook for 5-10 mins until the mushrooms are soft and most of the liquid in the pan has cooked. Stir in the flour, mixing it into the mushrooms to make a chunky paste, then pour in the milk, a little at a time, whisking continuously until you have a smooth sauce. Bubble for 2-3 mins until thick. Chop the chicken into small chunks and add back to the pan along with the lardons and any juices from the plate. Check the seasoning, stir in the parsley, then leave to cool and chill until you're ready to fill the pancakes.

3 To make the pancakes, tip the flour into a large bowl and season with ½ tsp salt. Make a well in the centre and crack in the 2 eggs. Pour in the milk, then use a large whisk to combine the eggs and milk, working the flour into the liquid until you have a smooth, thin batter. Heat a large frying pan or crêpe pan with a drizzle of oil.

4 When the pan is hot, pour in just under a ladleful of the batter and quickly swirl the pan to spread it across the surface, filling any gaps

with an extra drizzle of batter. When the underside of the pancake is golden, flip and cook for 30 secs more. Transfer to a plate and make three more pancakes in the same way, then cool until you're ready to assemble. If you want to make the pancakes a day ahead, once cool stack on a plate, separated with sheets of baking parchment, then wrap the plate in cling film. Chill for up to 2 days.

5 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 and line two baking trays with baking parchment. Take one pancake and brush a circle of beaten egg around the edge. Pile a quarter of the chicken mixture into the centre of the pancake (the sauce should have thickened while chilling), then fold the pancake over and press the edges together to make a pasty shape. Transfer to a baking tray and continue assembling the remaining pancakes. Brush the top of each one with more egg and scatter over the breadcrumbs, then bake for 20-25 mins, swapping the trays halfway through. Leave to cool for 5 mins before serving with salad or baked beans, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • folate • 1 of 5 a-day
PER SERVING 577 kcals • fat 23g • saturates 7g • carbs 49g • sugars 9g • fibre 4g • protein 42g • salt 2.7g





The Yorkshire pud meets the pancake – we love it!

Dutch baby pancake with drunken cherries

It looks and tastes like a Yorkshire pud but it is, in fact, a sweet German pancake, confusingly labelled as Dutch. Whatever the origin, the rules of the Yorkie should be applied here – don't open the oven before the cooking time is up or until the pancake has puffed to at least double its original size.

SERVES 4 PREP 20 mins COOK 20 mins A LITTLE EFFORT !

100g/4oz plain flour
3 large eggs
150ml/1/4pt milk
1 tsp vanilla extract
3 tbsp vegetable or sunflower oil

For the drunken cherries

400g can pitted cherries in light syrup, drained (reserve the syrup)
3 tbsp golden caster sugar
2 tbsp brandy or kirsch
vanilla ice cream, to serve

1 Tip the flour into a large bowl, make a well in the centre, crack in the eggs, then add the milk and vanilla. Use a large whisk to beat the eggs into the milk, slowly incorporating the flour, until you have a smooth batter. Set aside.

2 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Pour the oil into an ovenproof skillet pan, frying pan or tart Tatin tin (mine was 20cm in diameter) and place on the middle shelf to heat up – remove the top shelf, if you can, as the pancake will puff up as it cooks.

3 Tip the cherries, sugar and brandy into a frying pan with 2 tbsp of the syrup. Bring to a simmer, then bubble until the liquid is syrupy, adding a splash more cherry syrup if the cherries look dry. Set aside to cool a little.

4 When the pan is red hot, pull out the oven tray and pour in the batter – it should sizzle as it hits the pan. Quickly close the oven and leave undisturbed to cook for 20-25 mins until it looks like a giant Yorkshire pudding and is deep golden brown. Don't be tempted to open the door too early as it will sink. Serve the pancake in the pan, topped with ice cream and syrupy cherries.

GOOD TO KNOW 1 of 5 a-day
PER SERVING 357 kcals • fat 13g • saturates 3g • carbs 45g • sugars 27g • fibre 1g • protein 9g • salt 0.2g

Cocktail blinis

Blinis are an eastern European pancake similar to fluffy American pancakes, but much daintier. They're often made with buckwheat flour, so I've added a little to this batter. I love the distinctive flavour.

SERVES 8 (makes about 32) PREP 40 mins COOK 20 mins EASY
* blinis only

For the blinis

200ml/7fl oz milk
½ tsp golden caster sugar
25g/1oz butter, plus extra for frying

100g/4oz strong white flour
75g/2½oz buckwheat flour
1 tsp fast-action dried yeast
2 large eggs, separated

For the beetroot & Quail's egg topping

8 quail's eggs
140g/5oz cooked beetroot (about 2, not in vinegar), drained
3 tbsp cream cheese
½ pack cress

For the smoked salmon & cucumber topping

150g pack hot-smoked salmon
3 tbsp cream cheese
zest and juice ½ lemon
blob horseradish paste (optional)
½ cucumber
salmon roe or caviar (optional)

1 Heat the milk in a saucepan until just steaming, then remove from the heat and stir in the sugar and butter, swirling until the butter melts. Tip the flours and yeast into a bowl and season with ¼ tsp salt. Make a well in the middle and pour in the milk mixture and the egg yolks. Whisk until you have a smooth batter, then cover with cling film and set aside for 1 hr (if you want to make the blinis ahead and freeze them, jump to step 4).

2 Meanwhile, prepare the toppings. Bring a large pan of water to the boil, add the quail's eggs and cook for 2½ mins. Drain the eggs and run under cold water, then leave to cool completely. Tip the beetroot and cream cheese into a food processor and season with a pinch of salt and a generous grind of black pepper. Whizz to a purée, then scrape into a bowl and chill until ready to serve.

3 For the salmon topping, flake the salmon into a bowl, add the cream

cheese, lemon zest and juice, and horseradish, if using. Mash everything together with a fork, then chill until ready to serve. Peel the cucumber into long strips using a vegetable peeler, discarding the seedy middle part, and pop into a bowl of cold water.

4 Check the blini batter – it should be bubbly on the surface. Tip the egg whites into a bowl and whisk until they hold soft peaks. Add to the blini batter and gently fold together, trying to keep as much air in the mixture as possible.

5 Get a wire rack or two ready to cool the blinis (this will prevent them from going soggy when cooling). Heat a knob of butter and a drizzle of oil in a large pan (if you have two pans, this will speed things up). When the butter is foaming, spoon tablespoons of the batter into the pan, leaving space between each one as they will spread a little. Cook over a medium heat until bubbles pop on the surface and the undersides are golden brown. Flip over and cook for 1–2 mins more, then transfer to the rack to cool. Wipe out the pan and continue cooking the

remaining blinis in the same way. Will keep in an airtight container for 1 day, or freeze the cooked blinis on a baking tray covered with cling film, then foil, for up to a month. Defrost at room temperature before topping.

6 To assemble, top half the blinis with the beetroot purée, peel and halve the eggs and place them on top, then scatter with cress and season with a little black pepper. Top the remaining blinis with the salmon pâté. Dry the cucumber slices well and ruffle each piece back on itself, then squash firmly between your fingers so it lays flat. Place them on top of the salmon, add a tiny blob of caviar and eat as soon as possible, preferably with glasses of fizz!

GOOD TO KNOW folate

PER SERVING 320 kcal • fat 21g • saturates 12g • carbs 18g • sugars 3g • fibre 2g • protein 13g • salt 1.5g



Find more pancake recipes, including egg-dairy and gluten-free alternatives at bbcgoodfoodme.com



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A Feast of Flavours

Did you know that the Ottoman palace had a separate kitchen just for cooking halva? There were also Chief Halva-makers supervising the chefs. Kitchen gardens were extremely important for the palace kitchen. The duty of the Chief Gardener was essential: to bring the freshest fruits and vegetables into the kitchen

Imagine a kitchen that is 5,250 square metres divided into eight sections. Each section had its own oven and stove. There were cooks and kitchen boys with different areas of expertise. Apart from the sections where the meals were prepared, the cooks also had a cellar, a dormitory, a fountain, and even a mosque. If you are wondering whether that is possible, our answer is yes. This, after all, is the kitchen of the Topkapı Palace in the Ottoman Empire, also known as Matbah-ı Amire. Because of Ottoman food tradition, the kitchen had a special importance. The kitchens were considered to be the heart of the palace. For example, in the 16th century, a group of 60 expert chefs specialising in dough, bagels, rice, kebabs, vegetables, and desserts worked in the palace kitchen, assisted by 200 kitchen boys. The Chief Cook supervised them as a senior officer. Everyone's food was prepared here, from the Sultan to low-ranking palace officers.

A special Halva House was built in the kitchen for sultans and senior officers who were very fond of desserts. Sweets such as halva, fruit paste, and compote were prepared in the Halva House. The management of such an important section would have to be entrusted to an expert, of course. Thus, Chief Halva Makers were brought in to supervise the Halva House. The Chief Halva Maker worked with a full team.

The Halva House in Topkapı Palace was built next to the kitchens as a separate section. And note: the palace's dessert workshop doubled as a pharmacy. All sorts of medicines, plant-based recipes, and ointments were prepared in the Halva House under the supervision of a Chief Physician. For example, we know that sugar was put on orange blossoms, bergamot, and lemon

Chief Gardener



Chief
Halva-makers

places were the Chief Gardeners. During the Ottoman period, fruit and vegetable production was especially important in Anatolian agricultural products. It is estimated that between the 16th and 19th centuries, approximately 80 kinds of fruits and vegetables were produced in Ottoman Anatolia. Among these products were mandarins, oranges, peaches, lemons, bananas, pomegranates, bitter oranges, grapes, and cherries. They also produced vegetables such as broad beans, pumpkin, peas, dill, artichoke, beans, carrots, spinach, zucchini, and cauliflower, among others. The Chief Gardeners were in charge of all the produce that was used in the palace kitchen. They continued to be a part of the palace staff until the 17th century. Later, they were responsible for the public order in Istanbul. The best rowers among the Chief Gardeners were appointed as rowers on the Imperial Caique. They had the duty of accompanying the Sultan on his cruises.

Today, efforts to explore Ottoman culinary culture are widespread because it is a wonderful synthesis of Middle Eastern and Central Asian cuisines (the Islamic world) with contributions from European and Mediterranean cultures. This unique culture was spectacularly on display in the Ottoman palaces. Outside the palace, halva and fruit vendors throughout Istanbul would fill their stands with a variety of fruits and desserts.

and eaten. The Chief Physician thought it was good for the digestive system. Based on that, we also understand that natural recipes met the Ottoman Empire's needs for medicine.

In Charge of the Kitchen Gardens

Where did the fruits and vegetables for a large, busy kitchen come from? Some were grown in gardens and fields outside the palace walls. The people responsible for the management and administration of these

Today at Topkapı Palace Museum, you can visit the Halva House with its original equipment and exhibits featuring serving trays and remnants of palace cuisine and Ottoman food culture

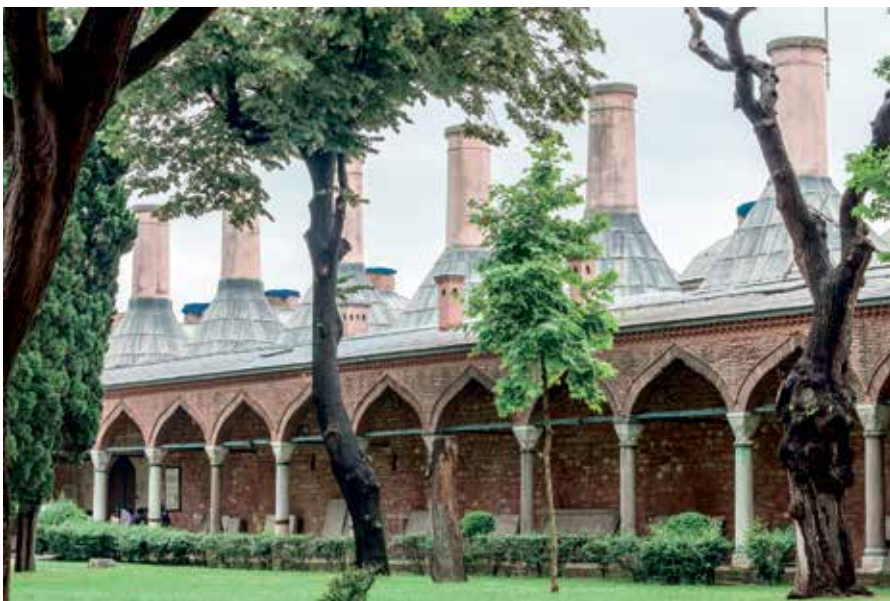


A symbol of the Mediterranean: Citrus Fruit

Turkey is one of the few countries where many varieties of citrus grow, along with the Mediterranean coasts of Spain, Italy, and Greece. It is believed that the Far East is the homeland of citrus fruits, especially the orange.

Delicious citrus fruits grow in the fertile soils of the Mediterranean region, one of the seven geographical regions of Turkey. The many different species of citrus fruit include the Washington Navel, Valencia, Blood Orange, Jaffa Orange, Finike Orange, and Ortaca Lemon. Citrus harvest in Turkey runs from early November through the second week of May. Some citrus fruits can stay on the trees until the end of June. Most of the production stretches along the coastline, from Antalya to Adana.

The Ottoman culinary culture marked its era. Guests from outside the Empire were welcomed with feasts. Culinary culture in the Ottoman era is distinctive for many reasons, from ingredients and cooking methods to eating habits, etiquette, and even food-related locations. During the Ottoman period, in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries, most dishes were prepared with local, seasonal ingredients as well as honey, meat, and nuts. Meats were usually cooked with dry fruits like apricots, raisins, and figs, and with fresh fruits such as apples, pears, melons, and especially citrus fruits such as oranges and lemons. Some sultans squeezed lemon on their fish, and lemon is still a key ingredient today. flavoCitrus compotes and especially orange baklava, a favourite of the sultans, are also worth mentioning here.

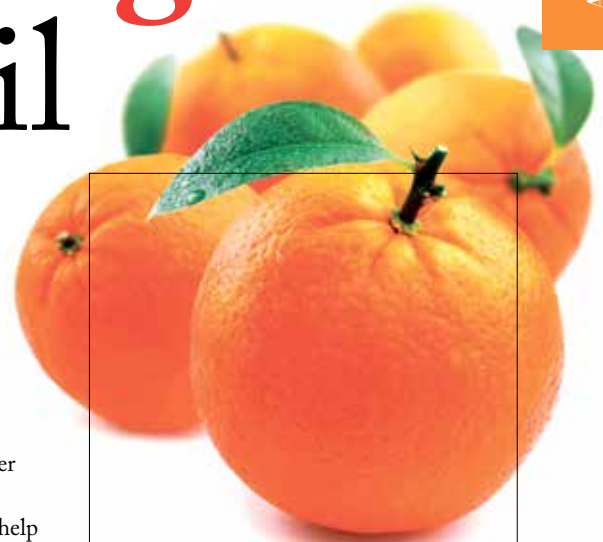


Never add the liquid from the bottom of the pot to the bowls. It will release bitterness from the skins, even though we already boiled them.



Stuffed Oranges with Olive Oil

Many citrus products have been essential in various dishes, from classic Turkish cuisine to the modern cuisine of today. While lemon is a must for the salads, orange is a given for cold dishes with olive oil these days



Mandarin and lime are also used occasionally in salads, desserts, and vegetable dishes. The acidity of citrus is as important as the saltiness in a good meal. I think I use citrus products in surprising ways. Their flavour and appearance stand out in the recipes I recommend for parties. Here is an example.

Serves 6-12

Preparation time: 25 minutes

Cooking Time: 1 hour

6 Washington oranges

2 cups rice

1 onion, finely chopped

1/2 small cup pine nuts

1/2 small cup currants

1 1/2 tsp allspice

1 1/2 tsp cinnamon

1/2 tsp black pepper

1 tsp sugar

Olive oil

Salt

Preparation:

Cut the tops of the oranges like a lid. Using a small spoon, empty the fruit into a large bowl. Be careful not to pierce the skin. Use your fingers to remove any excess flesh. That's actually pretty fun to do. You can give your children an orange and ask them to do the same. It's an entertaining activity!

Once emptied, the oranges look like tiny pots. Do not throw away the fruit; we will use it later for the filling. Put the tiny orange bowls into a large pot of boiling water and

boil for five minutes. Then drain the water and replace it with clean hot water. Boil again for another five minutes. This will help remove the bitterness of the orange skin. You can add a pinch of sugar into the water if you wish. After the second boil, remove the orange bowls and let them cool.

Meanwhile, wash the rice thoroughly with hot water. Lightly toast the pine nuts in a small pan. Remove stems from the currants and wash them with hot water. Put the finely chopped onions and 1/2 cup of olive oil into a pan. Sauté the onions until golden coloured. Add rice, allspice, cinnamon, pine nuts, currants, black pepper, and two tsp salt, and stir for seven to eight minutes. When the rice is toasted, add 1/2 cup of hot water and stir for three to four minutes. Spoon the filling into the orange bowls. Leave about two fingers of space from the top to avoid overflow; rice will swell as it is cooked. Strain the flesh of the oranges over a bowl to obtain clear juice. Add an equal amount of hot water, two tbsp olive oil, two tsp salt, and one tsp sugar, and stir. Using a small scoop, add a generous amount of the mixture to the orange bowls, leaving some aside. Pour some of the mixture onto the bottom of the pot and simmer, covered, over a low heat, for 35 minutes. Add the remaining orange mixture and some hot water, if necessary. Never add the liquid from the bottom of the pot to the bowls. It will release bitterness from the skins, even though we already boiled them. After about 50 minutes, check the orange skins. If they are soft enough to serve, your stuffed oranges are ready.

Enjoy!

Turkish citrus

Oranges are one of Turkey's most widely-produced citrus fruits. Citrus production is a key industry in Turkey. Thanks to the country's climate and modern farming methods, Turkey produces the finest quality oranges. Turkey exported 336,000 tonnes of oranges in 2015. Fifty-three percent of the country's oranges are produced in the cities of Mersin, Adana, and Hatay in the southern region of Çukurova. Essential oils are extracted from the skins, flowers, and leaves of the orange for use as flavouring and fragrance.



Serina Tara

Serina Tara brings together food culture, travel, and her passion for photography. She samples dishes from world famous chefs and then shares her knowledge through her recipes and photographs.



TRUFFLE *territory*

We caught up with the 'king of truffles' himself, chef Giorgio Locatelli during a recent visit to his restaurant Ronda Locatelli at Atlantis, The Palm, to get the lowdown on buying, storing and using the much-loved ingredient, truffles. He explains why it's best to steer clear of truffle oil, and gives input on the big risotto debate.

By Sophie McCarrick

Photographs SUPPL

Considered one of the finest Italian chefs in the world, Giorgio Locatelli was born into a family of restaurateurs in Northern Italy. He has since worked at some of the UK's most sought-after restaurants including the Savoy and opened Zafferano, where he earned his first Michelin star, followed by a second star at his current restaurant, Locanda Locatelli.

In Dubai regularly to touch base with his team at Ronda Locatelli, here's what chef Giorgio shared with us...

You've been in town recently to launch a special white and black truffle-inspired menu – tell us, what is the difference between white and black truffles?

I've been sourcing my truffles for several years from truffle hunter San Pietro a Pettine, based in Trevi. Although the truffles are from the same family they are totally different and have completely different characteristics. For example, my grandfather wouldn't eat black truffle, only white. He barely acknowledged that black truffle existed! At the beginning of the year we created a delicious one off menu at Ronda Locatelli with black truffle signature dishes. Although the white truffle aroma is intense, it tends to fade quickly, as opposed to the black truffle, which has a subtle taste, but lasts much longer.

When buying great black truffles, what should you look for?

When I'm buying black truffles for my restaurants I always make sure they are hard but not too heavy. This is because if they are heavy it can be a sign that they are spoiled. As a rule I only choose fresh black truffle, as this tastes the best, and recommend that you avoid jarred or pickled products. I like to speak directly to my supplier to ensure I know exactly where the truffle has been sourced from as this can also affect flavour and taste.



How should black truffles be stored and prepared for use?

The best way to store black truffle is in a cloth within an airtight container in the fridge. I'd also recommend taking the truffle out of the fridge and leaving in room temperature for one hour before you start cooking. Make sure you then give them a good clean using a small brush, being extra careful to get in the crevices and never to put the truffle under running water, as this will spoil it.

GLUTEN-FREE MENU

If you're looking for a healthy, but still tasty eating option for 2017 be sure to check out the gluten-free menu at Ronda Locatelli. With more than 50 gluten-free dishes, you can enjoy gluten-free pizzas (from Dhs65) and pastas to classic Italian desserts.



What's your take on truffle oil? So many restaurants are using it these days, but we hear mixed reviews...

For me this is an ingredient I never use. Truffle is best served fresh, and grated directly onto the dish.

For our readers visiting Ronda Locatelli, which dishes 'must try' dishes would you recommend?

One of the must-try dishes at Ronda Locatelli is our pizza. We have a wood fired pizza oven and it makes delicious authentic pizza. Also, the puntarelle salad and ravioli with ossobucco are favourites of mine.

For our home cooks out there, what mistakes should they stop making when whipping up a bowl of pasta?

Try not to overcomplicate it and keep it as simple as possible. One of the most pleasurable pasta dishes is spaghetti with tomato sauce; it's simple and delicious!



And what about risotto? So many of our readers say that they struggle with getting the consistency right.

The consistency of risotto is a big debate, in the north it is very soft the further south you go it becomes firmer. The idea is to achieve the consistency you want before you add your butter or cheese at the end. Keep in mind you can always thin it down little bit. It's a matter of opinion as to what you like really.

Taking it back to the beginning, what got you started in the kitchen?

Since as long as I can remember I have always loved food. I actually spent most of my childhood at my family restaurant; it is all I have ever known and a life-long passion of mine.

Tell us a little bit about your restaurant here, Ronda Locatelli at Atlantis the Palm?

Ronda Locatelli at Atlantis, The Palm offers guests the tastes of Italy in a warm and family-friendly environment at one of the most luxurious hotels in the world. The team and I have created a menu that

“Although the white truffle aroma is intense, it tends to fade quickly, as opposed to the black truffle, which has a subtle taste, but lasts much longer.”

focuses on authentic Italian cuisine, serving pizzas, pastas and other traditional favourites, all of which could be found in a restaurant in Italy.

How often will diners find you visiting the outlet?

I try to visit as much as possible, normally at least a couple of times a year. I love spending time with my team in the restaurant, as it's an opportunity for us to work together and develop ideas and new menus.

What do you think of the Middle East's food scene? Do you think Italian food is authentically represented here?

The Middle Eastern food scene is constantly evolving, and this includes Italian cuisine, which is getting better and better every year. However, we recognise that there is lots of competition within the

market and therefore understand how important it is to offer delicious and importantly authentic Italian food at Ronda Locatelli. I'm sure over the next 10 years we will see some great fusion food from Dubai, due to the incredible mix of cultures and emphasis on local food.

For those looking to learn more about Italian cuisine, which region in Italy is best to visit for food?

Each region in Italy, offers a fantastic expression of its history and culture through the food served there and the season also has an effect. For example, Piemonte in autumn is absolutely perfect.

Ronda Locatelli

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Middle East

ROMANTIC *resorts*

Looking to treat your loved one to something that lasts longer than just Valentine's Day? Here are a few of our favourite local and short-haul destinations for relaxation and gourmet bliss.

By Sophie McCarrick



Where?

CONRAD MALDIVES RANGALI ISLAND, MALDIVES

What's on offer?

Till the end of 2017, get 25% off best available rate including breakfast – valid for all rooms types. Prices from USD \$950 per room, per night (before discount and including tax). Conrad Maldives Rangali Island exudes romantic bliss. The resort offers unique ways to kindle romance amongst the picturesque surroundings of aquamarine waters, sugary soft beaches accented with palm trees and lush greenery.

Once there, treat your loved one to the 'Dream Island Experience', which whisks you both away by speedboat to your own private tropical island. The Conrad

Maldives crew will prepare a castaway style oasis on the beach and then anchor in the lagoon so that you can snorkel. Your gourmet castaway picnic will include a selection of cold meats, grilled vegetables, fresh salads and sandwiches, assorted sushi and sashimi and tropical fruits and hand crafted desserts.

Once back at the resort, Conrad Maldives is a true gourmet's delight with a choice of 12 restaurants and bars featuring unique and individual menus, celebrity chef restaurant Ufaa by Jereme Leung as the 12th dining outlet. The resort understands that a remote location needn't prohibit fine dining and good wines. It was the first resort to build an underground wine cellar in the Maldives; the first to create an undersea restaurant; the first to invite world-class chefs and winemakers to its islands and the first to establish a cheese bar.

Get in touch: Call +960 668-0629 or e-mail mlehi.maldives@conradhotels.com.



Where?

WALDORF ASTORIA RAS AL KHAIMAH

What's on offer?

Trust in hospitality that has welcomed kings and queens, hosted the world's grandest events and offered self-assured elegance and luxury for years. With a resort that exudes sophistication and charm, Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah truly reflects its Arabian heritage and offers a bespoke sense of romance that's difficult to achieve elsewhere.

In recognition of Valentine's Day, the resort will offer 'The February Couples' Retreat' – a wonderful opportunity for you to gain a host of exclusive added benefits while staying together as a couple. Available throughout the month of February, indulge in daily breakfast in bed, bath master experiences in the comfort of the room or suite and inclusive couples spa treatments – plus,



Text by SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs SUPPLIED



complimentary child services, if you're bringing the kids along.

Renowned for signature steaks, Lexington Grill at Waldorf Astoria RAK is a modern steakhouse with a curving interior design, reminiscent of the 1920's. This Valentine's period a five-course menu will be available including specials such as foie gras crumble, scallop and lobster and fox river strip loin with red wine sauce. The menu is available with single or full courses selection and dishes start from Dhs55. Pairing is also optional.
Get in touch: Call +971 7 203 5555 or e-mail rasalkhaimah.info@waldorfastoria.com.



Hoi An, Vietnam

Where?

THE H HOTEL, DUBAI

What's on offer?

Stay close to home and indulge with the 'Urban Romance Retreat' at H Hotel. After a night's stay with breakfast and then afternoon side-by-side in Mandara Spa, head down to Delphine Restaurant for a three-course meal and a bottle of wine.

When you go back up to your room, you'll be welcomed by a movie-style romantic set-up with more bubbly, chocolate dipped strawberries, candles, rose petals and an over-flowing bubble bath. The next morning, wake-up at leisure with breakfast in bed and a late check-out at 2pm.

Available from February 13-16, for Dhs1,685 per night, per couple (minimum two nights stay).

Get in touch: Call +971 4 501 8888 or e-mail welcome@h-hotel.com.



Where?

ANANTARA HOI AN RESORT, VIETNAM

What's on offer?

Anantara Hoi An Resort is inviting all couples to feel the love with their Romantic Getaway Package. The package includes three nights' accommodation or more in a room or suite, daily breakfast for two, one Dining by Design experience for two, and one 60-minute Aromatic Bliss Massage for two. Airport transfers are also included.

Couples looking for exceptional relaxation can enjoy a range of nourishing scrubs and wraps, heavenly massages and rejuvenating facials. Drawing on the centuries-old Vietnamese wellness techniques, signature Anantara Hoi An spa treatments incorporate natural ingredients such as local herbs, coconut milk, black sesame, coffee, aloe and local mineral mud for an experience firmly rooted in regional traditions.

The 'Be My Valentine' treatment is the perfect way to unwind with your significant other. It includes: choice of a 30-minute body scrub, choice of a 60-minute massage, and exotic



The H Hotel, Dubai



stimulate the lymphatic system to assist in the elimination of toxins that cause cellulite.

End your treatment with an invigorating back and shoulder massage to relief all tension before proceeding with a refreshing plunge at the pool and romantic bottle of bubbly at your own private cabana. Available all throughout February, from 10am-10pm, at Dhs1,300 for two people.

Then book in to a room overlooking the impressive Dubai Marina, for an evening of tranquility – without having to travel too far.

Get in touch: Call +971 4 436 7424, or visit mydubaivalentine.com or e-mail spa.dubaimarina@emaar.ae.

30-minute coconut milk bath, with complimentary glass of Champagne for both guests.

Hoi An's colonial charms are romantic and relaxation begins as you arrive at the airport, where Anantara will pick you up. Next, hideaway in comfortable luxury, waking up to leisurely breakfasts and picturesque river scenes. Indulge in an escape within an escape at our Hoi An spa, and celebrate evening romance with a tailor made Dining by Design experience, choosing from a collection of fine dining menus, or crafting the ideal culinary sequence with your personal chef. Then dine at a beautifully decorated table in a poolside pavilion, savouring an exquisite river outlook and the flawless service of your very own butler.

The Romantic Getaway Package starts from Dhs753 per room per night and the 'Be My Valentine' costs Dhs808.

Get in touch: Call +84 510 3914 555 or e-mail hoian@anantara.com.

Where? **THE ADDRESS DUBAI MARINA**

What's on offer?

If you're looking to stay close to home but indulge in luxury, head to The Address Dubai Marina, where the perfect 90-minutes awaits you and your partner at the spa. Prepare for an exotic bamboo scrub to exfoliate your skin followed by a warm bodywrap that helps the seaweed's rich array of minerals, vitamins and an enzyme





Where?

**MARRIOTT HOTEL
DOWNTOWN ABU DHABI**

What's on offer?

Make this Valentine's an exciting one and enjoy a fun-filled stay in the capital with a Play Brunch package for two and receive a complimentary room to stay the night (valid until February 24). A brunch for grown-ups showcasing food and beverages from the hotel's signature restaurants and bars, highlights include three core elements that enable every good brunch; with PG+ rated games, a magician, cartoonists and a resident DJ mixing up a storm (every Friday from 12.30-4pm). Starting at Dhs275 with soft drinks, dhs380 with house beverages and cocktails, and Dhs450 with sparkling.

After your night's stay, relax at the Saray Spa with the special Valentine's

offer (available daily in February from 10am to 10pm. Enjoy the 90-minute side-by side East meets West treatment for Dhs640 (excluding taxes). Single spa goers can enjoy a Four Hands massage; a choreographed massage that involves two therapists working simultaneously for the ultimate sensation. This month, Saray Spa is also upgrading a 60-minute four hands massage with a complimentary manicure or pedicure for Dhs440 (excluding taxes).

Get in touch: Call 02 304 7777 (quote promo code 'YX1') or visit marriottdowntownabudhabi.com.

Where?

**FAIRMONT FUJAIRAH
BEACH RESORT**

What's on offer?

Set against a dramatic backdrop of rugged terrain, expect to discover a destination lauded for its natural beauty – just a couple of hours drive from Dubai. This luxury sanctuary features rooms and suites with either marina or ocean views, while the dining venues offer international flavours to Italian cuisine to the freshest of seafood. Book now until September to avail the 'Discover Fujairah' package, which includes: 15% off Best Available Rate, buffet breakfast per person at Canvas, 24-hour check-in (applicable for arrivals from Sunday until Wednesday), welcome drink per person per stay, welcome amenities in the room. Treat your Valentine's this month, or present the booking as a gift to look forward to later in the year.

Get in touch: Call 09-2041111 or 800 2088 (toll free).



Fairmont Fujairah Beach Resort



Where?
FOUR SEASONS HOTEL
BAHRAIN BAY
What's on offer?

Hop on a short-haul flight to one of the most romantic hotel's in Manama, for heart-throbbing packages, decadent dining, spa treatments and more.

On February 14, the hotel's authentic Italian restaurant Vento is set to all love seekers with a four-course specialty menu prepared by Italian Chef Cristian Lisci. The menu begins with asparagus cream and crispy prawns, and continues with a line-up of romance-instilled dishes such as pink ravioli saffron with ricotta, pan seared hammour, or tenderloin scalloppini truffle cream and potato porcini soufflé. As a sweet ending, guests enjoy a delicious melting hot chocolate cake with pink peppercorn.

Or, on the same night enjoy dinner at CUT by Wolfgang Puck, the Hotel's American steak restaurant helmed by Executive Chef Brian Becher, will be

sharing the love with an enchanting five-course dinner menu. CUT's special dinner menu on Valentine's Day will feature beluga caviar from the Caspian Sea, French black truffle gnocchi, pan roasted French loup de mare, a duo of USDA prime beef and a lavish dessert highlighting sweet fresh raspberries with white chocolate mousse.

After dinner, The Spa at Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay invites you to experience the Couple's Retreat package, where you can indulge in a two-hour spa ritual complete with a relaxing full body massage, skin scrub and express facial using only 100 percent natural products. The journey continues as guests savor a romance-infused three-course lunch, snacks or dinner including non-alcoholic beverages at Vento.

Get in touch: Call +973 1711 5000 or see fourseasons.com/Bahrain.



Where?
SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, DUBAI
What's on offer?

Spoil your special someone from the comfort of your luxury suite (Suite Romance Package). Delight in a romantic three-course set menu brought to the suite with a bottle of wine and special flower arrangement. Start the following morning with breakfast in bed, then let your worries melt away with a couple's massage at CHI, The Spa at Shangri-La. Finish your getaway with Asian High Tea served in the suite. Prices starting at Dhs1,750 per couple, per room (valid February 1 – April 30, 2017)

Get in touch: Call 04-405 2825 or e-mail reservations.sldb@shangri-la.com.





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Everything you need to know about

Chocolate

As one of the most popular food types and flavours in the world, we take a look at all things chocolate. **By Sophie McCarrick**

Globally, chocolate is one of our ultimate 'go-to' foods for comfort and indulgence. Had a bad day? Snuggled up on the sofa? Feeling under the weather? Want to give a special gift? – we all (well, the great majority of us) turn to chocolate.

It's used in cakes, puddings, brownies, cookies, candies, granola bars, cereals, and even used in sauces to compliment different types of meat. It's gifted for Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween, Christmas and many other celebratory occasions, and it's even used to drink in beverages like chocolate milk and hot chocolate.

So, what is it exactly that makes this wonderfood so wonderful and loved around the world? And, how much of it should we actually be eating?

If you're curling up with a massive slab every night, obviously it's not going to be the healthiest for you or your waistline, however, medically it's been proven that chocolate (meaning dark chocolate only) with a cocoa percentage of 70% or more, is very good for us!

As research tells, health experts have found that dark chocolate – when consumed in moderation – is great for the heart, circulation and the brain.

For treating brain injuries like a concussion, it's thought that the anti-inflammatory qualities of dark chocolate are beneficial, while flavanols are reported to assist in reducing memory loss in older people. It's also

been reported that they can help with protect the skin against sun damage (although we wouldn't recommend skipping a splash of sun cream!).

Another study claims that consumption of cocoa reduces levels of bad cholesterol, while raising the levels of good cholesterol. This in turn could potentially lower the risk of cardiovascular disease.

And, to top off the benefits, chocolate contains phenylethylamine (PEA) – the chemical your brain produces when you have that loved-up feeling. With PEA encouraging your brain to release feel-good endorphins, there's no surprise that a good bar of chocolate brings us comfort and smiles.



FACT: Chocolate comes from a small tropical tree native to Central and South America called the *Theobroma cacao* – or simply, 'cacao'. The tree is also grown commercially throughout the tropics, and around 70% of the world's cacao is grown in Africa.

Did you know?

CHOCOLATE MONEY ISN'T JUST SOMETHING YOU GET AT CHRISTMAS. In Mayan times cultivation of the cocoa bean was restricted, making chocolate money worth a fortune.



A RIVER OF CHOCOLATE ONCE EXISTED. In the original version of Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory filmed in 1971, the famous river Augustus Gloop nearly drowned in was filled with 15,000 gallons of water mixed with chocolate and cream. With all the cream, the river spoiled not too long after creation, and the cast revealed it left a terrible smell.

CACAO TREES LIVE FOR A LONG (VERY LONG) TIME. They can live to be 200 years old, but they produce marketable cocoa beans for only 25 years.



CREATION OF THE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE WAS ACCIDENTAL. In 1930 Ruth Wakefield realised she was out of baker's chocolate and mixed broken piece of Nestle chocolate into her cookie dough, expecting to create chocolate cookies. Instead, the chocolate chip cookie was born, and she later sold the idea to Nestle in return for a lifetime supply of chocolate.

CHOCOLATE WAS ONCE VERY DIFFICULT TO BUY. That is until the first machine-made chocolate was produced in Barcelona, Spain, in 1780

Share this
chocolate treat
with your
Valentine!



Chocolate, mint & chilli truffles

Make these easy homemade truffles as an edible gift or after dinner treat - balance heat from the chilli with cooling mint extract

PREP TIME 10 mins COOK TIME 10 mins plus 2 hrs chilling EASY

150ml double cream
100g milk chocolate, chopped
100g dark chocolate, chopped
2 tbsps butter
3 tbsps golden syrup
1 tsp mint extract
2 red bird's-eye chillies, roughly chopped
50g blanched almonds, finely chopped and toasted

1 Pour the cream into a pan and heat until just steaming, but not boiling. Put the chopped chocolate and butter in a bowl, pour over the hot cream, and stir until smooth. Add the golden syrup, mint extract and chilli. Chill until firm, about 2 hrs.

2 Using a melon baller roll into 1 tsp balls. Roll the balls in chopped almonds and set on a tray. Cover and chill until serving.

Get your chocolate fix!



Boutique Le Chocolat
Location: City Walk,
Dubai.
Call: 04-3334245



Godiva
Location: Dubai Mall,
Mall of the Emirates, plus
various other locations.
Call: 800-9-463482



Cocosia Artisan Chocolates
Location: Shop 2 & 3, Rasis
Business Centre, Al Barsha 1
(behind Mall of the Emirates).
Call: 04-3950977



TASTE OF DUBAI RETURNS

Meet Michelin Star Chef Jean-Christophe Novelli at Taste of Dubai from March 9 to 11, where you can cook alongside him and learn the latest in world-class cuisine. For now – here's a delicious taster of his food to try at home!



COOK AT HOME

A 3-course menu by Chef Jean-Christophe Novelli



STARTER

Mouclade Des Boucholeurs – Shetland blue shell mussels

SERVES 4 PREP TIME 30 mins (not including the 3 hours of mussel cleaning) COOK TIME 15 mins

1.5kg Shetland blue shell mussels (if in season, normal live rope mussels can be used)
100g oats
1 tsp plain flour
3 shallots (finely sliced)
1 large portobello mushroom (soaked in a bowl of cold water for at least 30 minutes

before using)
1 bulb garlic (halved width-ways with peel on)
250ml Muscadet or dry white wine
250ml crème fraîche
1 sprig thyme
1 bay leaf
1 sprig tarragon
1 tsp mild curry powder
½ nutmeg (grated)
½ tsp ground turmeric
½ tbsp honey
2 tbsp extra virgin rapeseed oil
Crushed black pepper to taste

1 In a large bowl, place all the mussels and oats cover them completely with cold water for at least 3 hours. This will clean the mussels and reduce the chance of having gritty mussels. After 3 hours, remove the mussels and strain through a colander rinsing under cold water.
2 Remove the mushroom from the water, squeeze lightly and dice.
3 Using a large deep pan with a tight fitting lid (large enough for the mussels and ingredients) heat on a high heat, add the rapeseed oil, sliced shallots, thyme,

garlic halves, honey, bay leaf, nutmeg, turmeric, diced mushrooms and curry powder. Stir for about 5 minutes. Then add the mussels, cover with the lid and cook for another 5 minutes or until then mussels just start to open. Once they start opening, only cook for a further 30 seconds.

4 Using a colander placed over a bowl strain the mussels and all the ingredients and cover the colander with cling-film.

5 Preparing The Sauce: replace the strained liquid into the original pan used to cook the mussels and on a high heat, bring the liquid to a boil and reduce the liquid until it has a thick consistency. Then add the crème fraîche and tarragon, taste the sauce and adjust the seasoning to suit your taste. Remove from the heat and cover.

6 In the meantime, pick out ½ of the mussels that look good (large and juicy) and place to one side to help with your presentation. The rest of the mussels need to be removed from their shells and put into the warm sauce.

7 To Serve: take one side of the saved mussels shells off and place them around your serving bowl, then ladle the remaining mussels and sauce into the bowl, decorate with any chopped green herbs and serve immediately with fresh warm crusty bread.

Taste of Dubai

The UAE's favourite food, drink and music festival celebrates its 10-year anniversary this year with a star-studded line up of celebrity chefs, 24 of the city's hottest restaurants and music icon Billy Ocean headlining the entertainment stage from March 9 to 11. With appearances from the likes of Michel Roux Jr, Gary Rhodes, Aldo Zilli, Eric Lanlard, Jean-Christophe Novelli, Mohammad Orfali and Tarek Ibrahim, Tim Anderson, Atul Kochhar and Paolo Pettenuzzo – the show promises to be the best yet.

At Taste of Dubai, eat your way around 24 of the city's hottest restaurants for as little as Dhs15 per plate. This year sees the return of some of the festival favourites as well as a number of new eateries including Ramusake, Weslodge, Big Easy Bar and Grill, Aubaine, Burger and Lobster, Carnival by Tresind, Catch, Namu, J&G Steakhouse, Cook Hall, Sonamu, Olea, The Gramercy, Fratelli La Bufala, Abyat, Royal Orchid and Spice&Ice.



MAIN

Lotte Provençal– Monkfish with tomatoes, herbs and garlic

This popular dish from the Mediterranean South of France has been enjoyed for many years since fishermen decided that the flesh from such an ugly fish was so tasty!

SERVES 4 PREP TIME 15 mins
COOK TIME 20 mins

1kg fresh cleaned monkfish (or any other fresh fish fillet e.g. cod, halibut, haddock, hake etc.)
125ml dry white wine
1 yellow pepper (diced)
½ fennel bulb (finely sliced)
2 onions (finely sliced)
1 tsp smoked paprika
1 tbsp extra virgin rapeseed oil
1 sprig thyme
4 sage leaves

10 black olives
2 cloves garlic (crushed)
1 bunch fresh basil (kept in ice cold water)
1 tsp honey
2 tbsps extra virgin olive oil
400g chopped tinned tomatoes (or 6 diced plum tomatoes, unpeeled)

- 1** In a large sauté pan heat the rapeseed oil and introduce the fish. Fry on each side for approx. 5 minutes, take the fish out carefully and place on plate, cover with clingfilm.
- 2** In the same pan add the onions, fennel, peppers, smoked paprika, thyme, sage, olives, honey and sweat until everything is soft, probably within approx. 10 minutes then add the stock and wine (if using) and simmer for a further 10 minutes, uncovered.
- 3** Just before serving put the fish back into the pan until the fish is warmed through and serve in the pan and tear some of the wet fresh basil leaves and sprinkle over the



DESSERT

Clafoutis with Strawberries

Originating from the Limousin region, this is now a popular dish all over France.

SERVES 4 PREP TIME 15 mins
COOK TIME 60 mins

4 eggs (whisked)
150g sugar
1 vanilla pod (halved lengthways, seeds scraped out)
100g plain flour
2 tsp baking powder
30g unsalted butter (very soft)
180ml full-fat milk (warmed)
5ml Kirsch (optional)
700g large strawberries (washed, stalks left on and halved lengthways)
icing sugar (to dust)

- 1** Preheat the oven to 160°C (fan), 180°C (non-fan), gas mark 4.
- 2** Whisk the eggs in a large bowl. Add the sugar and keep whisking, using a hand whisk. Add the seeds of the vanilla pod and continue whisking. Add the plain flour and baking powder and whisk until frothy. Whisk in the butter and introduce the warmed milk, whisking continuously. Add the Kirsch (if using).
- 3** Spread the halved strawberries over the base of a gratin or baking dish. Place in the oven for 15 minutes without anything on them, to increase the intensity of their flavour. Do not let them disintegrate. Then, pour the 'custard' mixture over the strawberries until they are covered. Place the dish carefully into the hot oven and bake for approx 35-40 minutes until the top has browned and a knife or skewer comes out clean.
- 4** Remove from the oven and sprinkle with sieved icing sugar before serving.

Want to go to Taste of Dubai 2017?

Location: Dubai Media City Amphitheatre

When? Thursday 9 to Saturday 11 of March 2017. From 4pm-12am on Thursday, 12pm-12am on Friday and 12pm-11pm on Saturday.

Tickets: tasteofdubaifestival.com or platinumlist.net. Standard tickets start from Dhs49.50, VIP tickets start from Dhs199.50. Kids under 12 can enter for free. Tickets also available on the door.



HEALTHY EATING WITH RIGHT BITE

Our latest Food Club event saw foodies gather at Nathalie's Café in Sports City for a morning of expert diet tips and scrumptious nibbles with Right Bite, the Dubai-born healthy eating company that offers nutrition and catering services. During the event, attendees were treated to one-to-one nutrition consultations with Right Bite's senior nutritionist, they played various health-driven games, snacked on samples from the Right Bite food range, and were all given professional advice for maintaining a healthy diet. Whether you're looking to lose weight, lean up, maintain a specialised diet, or detox, Right Bite offers tailor-made food plans for all requirements.





What is Right Bite?

Established in Dubai in 2004, The Right Bite Nutrition & Catering Services L.L.C. is a specialised centre for expert nutritional consultation and bespoke gourmet healthy meal delivery service. A pioneer in advocating a healthier diet and lifestyle, Right Bite is dedicated to helping customers achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle through educated food choices, and by providing customised meal packages that are results-oriented, convenient and flavourful.



Want to sign-up with Right Bite?

Nutrition Center Contact: 800-HEALTHY or 04-3388763

Email: info@right-bite.com

Visit: right-bite.com

BILLY OCEAN
HEADLINING
THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 2017



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www.tasteofdubaifestival.com



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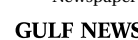
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WIN!

**A 2-night stay at
Al Ain Rotana,
worth over
Dhs5,000!**

Win a two-night stay in Al Ain Rotana's Exclusive Falaj Suite with breakfast and dinner for two at Zest Restaurant!

A perfect escape for those who want to experience luxury and to relax in the greenest city of the UAE. Conveniently located in the heart of Al Ain city, a few minutes away from all city facilities and attractions sites. Al Ain Rotana consists of elegant 242 units varying from rooms, studios, suites, chalets and villas offering variety of options for the weekend travellers.

Besides the original amenities and complete facilities Al Ain Rotana invites you to indulge in a deluxe lifestyle in the middle of the tranquillity of the exclusive Falaj wing, which opened in 2013. Enjoy private access to Falaj pool, exclusive underground parking and view of enchanting gardens and pool.

Al Ain Rotana takes pride in presenting its six world-class restaurants and bars each with its own unique ambience, service and cuisine. Zest, the all-day dining restaurant serving international and traditional cuisine, Min Zaman the Lebanese restaurant with

Arabic entertainment, the world famous, Trader Vic's the French-Polynesian restaurant offering exotic cuisine and signature cocktails from South Seas, Atrium the lobby café, offering selection of coffee and tea where you can relax while listening to live piano performance, Aquarius the pool bar and Moodz lounge bar the happening place in town with resident DJ performance.

Awarded at the esteemed World Luxury Spa Awards, twice in 2014 and 2016 - Zen the spa at Rotana consists of 8 individual treatment rooms, a couple suite, and separate relaxation rooms for female and male, saunas, steam rooms, plunge pool and Hammam.

All these facilities combined together create the right mixture to satisfy the weekend travellers seeking peace and tranquillity in Al Ain Rotana as its famous for being a weekend destination to escape the big cities and enjoy a relaxing weekend.

The prize draw for two night stay inclusive of breakfast and dinner for two at Al Ain Rotana will be made at the end of February 2017. Prize certificate cannot be exchanged for cash, is not transferable, is not for resale. Booking in advance is required and subject to availability.

**SCAN THIS QR CODE
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OUR WEBSITE.**



Log on to bbcgoodfoodme.com

to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

When did Al Ain Rotana open the Falaj wing?

*Terms & conditions apply. Flights are not included in this prize. Employees of CPI Media Group are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.



WIN!

**A luxurious stay
at La Ville Hotel & Suite CITY WALK
Dubai, worth over
AED 5,000!**

Win an overnight stay in a Premium room for two at the newly opened La Ville Hotel & Suite CITY WALK Dubai, with buffet breakfast at Chival!

Experience La Ville Hotel & Suites, a stylish and elegant boutique hotel found in the heart of CITY WALK, Dubai's new urban living destination. Part of the Autograph Collection, this low rise property offers a unique and relaxed vibe amongst the metropolis of the city with its 77 rooms, 11 suites and 68 apartments.

Guests can rely on warm and personalized service with surprising cosmopolitan and social experiences, tailored to

individual preferences and moods.

With your overnight stay you will enjoy a scrumptious breakfast at Chival, one of three restaurants in the hotel, alongside a lobby café and rooftop bar boasting mesmerizing skyline views.

La Ville Hotel & Suites is for everyone, the sophisticated experience seeker, frequent traveler or stylish socialite looking for a lively urban setting.

The prize draw for the luxurious stay at La Ville Hotel & Suite CITY WALK Dubai will be made at the end of February 2017. Booking in advance from Feb 1 – March 15, 2017 is required and subject to availability.

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Which hotel collection does La Ville Hotel & Suites fall under?

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COMPETITIONS

Fabulous prizes, from dining vouchers to gourmet goodies, up for grabs.



WIN!

**DE'LONGHI
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DHS1,199**

De'Longhi Multifry Multicooker is an innovative cooking appliance combining

a low-oil fryer and a multicooker to meet each and every need for all the kitchens of the world. It enables you to rapidly fry tasty fresh potatoes in a healthier way with minimum oil and to prepare a variety of recipes: from risottos to cous cous, from stews to ratatouilles. Multifry even allows you to bake pizzas, cakes and pies. The Extra Chef model is the top of the range. Healthy frying and cooking aren't the only options – a range of baking recipes are also easily created, with pizzas, cakes and pies. And to give users new ideas and cooking suggestions, De Longhi has also created a recipe application that can be downloaded on users' mobile phones. Here, food lovers can browse through a large variety of traditional and worldwide recipes, in both English and Arabic, featuring ingredients and cooking instructions to prepare the ideal meal. The Multifry Multicookers are the ideal kitchen helpers, with options of creating tasty, healthier meals to share with family and friends.



WIN!

**A TABLE FOR 4 AT THE FOUNDRY'S
THURSDAY STEAK FEAST WITH
HOUSE BEVERAGES! WORTH DHS1,440**

The Foundry restaurant, an award-winning steakhouse is giving you the opportunity to win an amazing table for four at its newly launched concept – Thursday Steak Feast. Delight your taste buds with an array of the best selection from The Foundry restaurant menu for a unique experience.



WIN!

**A DINING VOUCHER FOR KABABJI
GRILL! WORTH DHS500**

Kababji Grill, the award-winning food chain, offers authentic, healthy, fresh-from-the-market produce cooked up in contemporary environment. The brand has built an avid following across the UAE due to its aromatic flavours, succulent meats chargrilled to perfection and the health-conscious philosophy that is core to the brand values. Readers have a unique opportunity to win 500AED to spend at one of Kababji Grill's Dubai outlets to treat friends and family to a truly Lebanese feast. Outlets: Al Ghurair Centre in Deira, Marina Promenade, Bay Ave in Business Bay, Community Centre in Mirdif.



WIN!

**FRIDAY BRUNCH FOR 4 AT LEGENDS!
WORTH DHS1,140**

Win a Friday brunch for four at Legends worth Dhs1,140 inclusive of food and soft beverages. Valid for afternoon or evening brunch. Featuring floor to ceiling glass windows, Legends is the perfect place to

enjoy a delicious Friday brunch or dinner overlooking the waters of the Dubai Creek. A special design feature on the terrace is the floating VIP table that can seat up to eight people, set amidst the soothing reflection pool.



WIN!

**A 1-NIGHT STAY AT PREMIER INN
DUBAI IBN BATTUTA MALL FOR
2 WITH BREAKFAST & DHS300
VOUCHER FOR MR TOAD'S!
WORTH OVER DHS1,000**

The three-star Premier Inn Dubai

Ibn Battuta Mall has become an instant hit with UAE and overseas visitors. Connected to the Ibn Battuta Mall and adjacent Dubai Metro station by a pedestrian bridge, the hotel delivers a level of service which exceeds expectations for a mid-market, affordable property. Featuring spacious 28sqm bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms, a flat screen TV, tea and coffee making facilities and a work desk, the hotel offers great value alongside a unique Good Night Guarantee. Guests can also take advantage of the swimming pool, a well-equipped gym, an all-day dining restaurant, a full licensed bar in Mr Toad's Lounge & Kitchen, and a Costa coffee shop in the lobby.



WIN!

**A GIFT VOUCHER TO SHOP ON
CITRUSTV.COM! WORTH DHS300**

CitrusTV.com, the Middle East's home shopping network, brings you the latest kitchen and beauty innovations from around the world. Order your products today from www.citrusstv.com or call 800 95 95. CitrusTV is one of the leading multi-channel home shopping retailers in MENA. Based in Dubai, the company sells its products on its own dedicated TV channel and its e-commerce and mobile app platforms to 17 markets, covering the GCC, Levant and North Africa. At CitrusTV, the goal is to provide each customer with an enjoyable home shopping experience by offering a variety of quality products in the categories of beauty, fashion, kitchen & home, accessories and jewellery all handpicked by experts and delivered with a superior service that matches our customer's expectations.



WIN!

THE ENTERTAINER – DUBAI BODY APP! WORTH DHS345

Pamper yourself with fabulous buy one get one free offers for massages, facials, fitness classes, gents grooming, teeth whitening, manicures, beach passes and more across Dubai! Beauty and fitness offers can be redeemed with a friend, or you can buy one treatment and get the second treatment free of charge at a later date! It also includes the 'Hotels Worldwide' category featuring buy one night, get one free offers at over 500 hotels in over 30 popular destinations such as Oman, Fujairah, Jordan, Thailand, Qatar, Lebanon and more.



To be in with a chance of winning these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website, and answer the simple questions.

*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of CPI Media Group and entrants below 21 years old are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.

BRUNCH + STAY
*BOOK BRUNCH FOR TWO
AND STAY FOR FREE

EAT

PLAY

LAUGH

Brunch
WITH US

BOOK BRUNCH FOR TWO AND STAY THE NIGHT ON US

EAT Package: AED 275 (incl. soft drinks)

PLAY Package: AED 380 (incl. house beverages)

LAUGH Package: AED 450 (incl. sparkling grape)

Fridays 12:30pm – 04:00pm



#EatPlayLaughAD



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*All prices mentioned are subject to 10% service charge, 6% tourism fees and 4% municipality fees.

AED 15 per room per night will be charged as municipality guest fees.

Visit eatplaylaughbrunch.com to book the brunch + stay package.

Valid until 24 February. Subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply.



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